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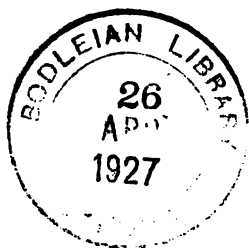
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THE
OFFICER'S MANUAL.

MILITARY MAXIMS
OF
NAPOLEON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY
COLONEL D'AGUILAR,
Deputy Adj. Gen. to the Troops serving in Ireland.

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TO THOSE OFFICERS
OF THE BRITISH ARMY,
INTO WHOSE HANDS
THE ORIGINAL MAY NOT HAVE FALLEN,
OR WHO MAY HAVE WANTED AN OPPORTUNITY
OF COMBINING THE STUDY OF SCIENCE
WITH ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION,
THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IS INSCRIBED,
AS A FRESH INCITEMENT
TO PROFESSIONAL ENTERPRIZE
AND ACQUIREMENT,
BY THEIR FAITHFUL
AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THE TRANSLATOR.

John S. Folds, Printer,
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MILITARY MAXIMS

OF

NAPOLEON.

I.

THE frontiers of states are either large rivers, or chains of mountains, or deserts. Of all these obstacles to the march of an army, the most difficult to overcome, is the desert;—mountains come next, and large rivers occupy the third place.

II.

In forming the plan of a campaign, it is requisite to foresee every thing the enemy may do, and to be prepared with the necessary means to counteract it.

Plans of campaign may be modified, *ad infinitum*, according to circumstances, the genius of the general, the character of the troops, and the features of the country.

III.

An army which undertakes the conquest of a country, has either its two wings resting upon neutral territories, or upon great natural obstacles, such as rivers or chains of mountains. It happens in some cases that

only one wing is so supported, and in others, that both are exposed.

In the first instance cited, viz : where both wings are protected, a general has only to guard against being penetrated in front. In the second, where one wing only is supported, he should rest upon the supported wing. In the third, where both wings are exposed, he should depend upon a central formation, and never allow the different corps under his command to depart from this ; for if it be difficult to contend with the disadvantage of having *two* flanks exposed, the inconvenience is doubled by having *four*, tripled if there be *six* ; that is to say, if the army is divided into two or three different corps. In the first instance then, as above quoted, the line of operation may tend indifferently to the right or to the left. In the second, it should be

directed towards the wing in support. In the third, it should be perpendicular to the centre of the army's line of march. But in all these cases, it is necessary every five or six days, to have a strong post or an entrenched position upon the line of march, in order to collect stores and provisions, to organize convoys, to form a centre of movement, and establish a point of defence to shorten the line of operation.

IV.

When the conquest of a country is undertaken by two or three armies, which have each their separate line of operation, until they arrive at a point fixed upon for their concentration, it should be laid down as a principle, that the junction should never

take place near the enemy, because the enemy in uniting his forces, may not only prevent it, but beat the armies in detail.

V.

All wars should be governed by certain principles, for every war should have a definite object, and be conducted according to the rules of art. War should only be undertaken with forces proportioned to the obstacles to be overcome.

VI.

At the commencement of a campaign, to *advance* or *not to advance*, is a matter for grave consideration, but when once the offensive has been assumed, it must be sus-

tained to the last extremity. However skilful the manœuvres, a retreat will always weaken the *morale* of an army, because in losing the chances of success, these last are transferred to the enemy. Besides retreats cost always more men and *materiel*, than the most bloody engagements; with this difference, that in a battle, the enemy's loss is nearly equal to your own, whereas in a retreat, the loss is on your side only.

VII.

An army should be ready every day, every night, and at all times of the day and night, to oppose all the resistance of which it is capable. With this view, the soldier should be invariably complete in arms and ammunition; the infantry should never be without

its artillery, its cavalry, and its generals ; and the different divisions of the army should be constantly in a state to support and to be supported.

The troops, whether halted or encamped, or on the march, should be always in favourable positions, possessing the essentials required for a field of battle ; for example, the flanks should be well covered, and all the artillery so placed, as to have free range, and to play with the greatest advantage. When an army is in column of march, it should have advanced guards and flanking parties, to examine well the country in front, to the right and to the left, and always at such distance as to enable the main body to deploy into position.

VIII.

A general in chief, should ask himself frequently in the day, what should I do if the enemy's army appeared now in my front, or on my right, or my left? If he have any difficulty in answering these questions, he is ill posted, and should seek to remedy it.

IX.

The strength of an army, like the power in mechanics, is estimated by multiplying the mass by the rapidity; a rapid march augments the *morale* of an army, and increases all the chances of victory.

X.

When an army is inferior in number, inferior in cavalry, and in artillery, it is essential to avoid a general action. The first deficiency should be supplied by rapidity of movement; the want of artillery by the nature of the manœuvres; and the inferiority in cavalry, by the choice of positions. In such circumstances, the *morale* of the soldier does much.

XI.

To act upon lines far removed from each other, and without communications, is to commit a fault which always gives birth to a second. The detached column has only its

orders for the first day. Its operations on the following day depend upon what may have happened to the main body. Thus the column either loses time upon emergency, in waiting for orders, or acts without them, and at hazard. Let it therefore be held as a principle, that an army should always keep its columns so united, as to prevent the enemy from passing between them with impunity. Whenever, for particular reasons, this principle is departed from, the detached corps should be independent in their operations. They should move towards a point fixed upon for their future junction. They should advance without hesitating, and without waiting for fresh orders, and every previous means should be concerted to prevent their being attacked in detail.

XII.

An army ought only to have one line of operation. This should be preserved with care, and never abandoned but in the last extremity.

XIII.

The distances permitted between corps of an army upon the march, must be governed by the localities, by circumstances, and by the object in view.

XIV.

Among mountains, a great number of positions are always to be found very strong

in themselves, and which it is dangerous to attack. The character of this mode of warfare consists in occupying camps on the flanks or in the rear of the enemy, leaving him only the alternative of abandoning his position without fighting, to take up another in the rear, or to descend from it in order to attack you. In mountain warfare, the assailant has always the disadvantage. Even in offensive warfare in the open field, the great secret consists in defensive combats, and in obliging the enemy to attack.

XV.

The first consideration with a General who offers battle, should be the glory and honor of his arms; the safety and preservation of his men is only the second; but it is in the

enterprize and courage resulting from the former, that the latter will most assuredly be found. In a retreat, besides the honor of the army, the loss is often equal to two battles. For this reason we should never despair, while brave men are to be found with their colours. It is by this means we obtain victory, and deserve to obtain it.

XVI.

It is an approved maxim in war, never to do what the enemy wishes you to do, for this reason alone, that he desires it. A field of battle, therefore, which he has previously studied and reconnoitred, should be avoided, and double care should be taken where he has had time to fortify or entrench. One consequence deducible from this princi-

ple is, never to attack a position in front which you can gain by turning.

XVII.

In a war of march and manœuvre, if you would avoid a battle with a superior army, it is necessary to entrench every night, and occupy a good defensive position. Those natural positions which are ordinarily met with, are not sufficient to protect an army against superior numbers without recourse to art.

XVIII.

A general of ordinary talent occupying a bad position, and surprized by a superior force, seeks his safety in retreat; but a

great captain supplies all deficiencies by his courage, and marches boldly to meet the attack. By this means he disconcerts his adversary, and if this last shows any irresolution in his movements, a skilful leader profiting by his indecision, may even hope for victory, or at least employ the day in manœuvring—at night he entrenches himself, or falls back to a better position. By this determined conduct he maintains the honor of his arms, the first essential to all military superiority.

XIX.


The transition from the defensive to the offensive, is one of the most delicate operations in war.

XX.

It may be laid down as a principle, that the line of operation should not be abandoned; but it is one of the most skilful manœuvres in war, to know how to change it, when circumstances authorize or render this necessary. An army which changes skilfully its line of operation, deceives the enemy, who becomes ignorant where to look for its rear, or upon what weak points it is assailable.

XXI.

When an army carries with it a battering train, or large convoys of sick and wounded.



it cannot march by too short a line upon its depôts.

XXII.

The art of encamping in position is the same as taking up the line in order of battle in this position. To this end, the artillery should be advantageously placed, ground should be selected, which is not commanded or liable to be turned, and, as far as possible, the guns should cover and command the surrounding country.

XXIII.

When you are occupying a position which the enemy threatens to surround, collect all your force immediately, and menace *him*


with an offensive movement. By this manœuvre you will prevent him from detaching and annoying your flanks, in case you should judge it necessary to retire.

XXIV.

Never lose sight of this maxim, that you should establish your cantonments at the most distant and best protected point from the enemy, especially where a surprize is possible. By this means you will have time to unite all your forces before he can attack you.

XXV.

When two armies are in order of battle, and one has to retire over a bridge, while



the other has the circumference of the circle open, all the advantages are in favor of the latter. It is then a general should show boldness, strike a decided blow, and manœuvre upon the flank of his enemy. The victory is in his hands.

XXVI.

It is contrary to all true principle, to make corps which have no communication, act separately against a central force whose communications are open.

XXVII.

When an army is driven from a first position, the retreating columns should rally always sufficiently in the rear, to prevent

any interruption from the enemy. The greatest disaster that can happen, is when the columns are attacked in detail, and before their junction.

XXVIII.

No force should be detached on the eve of a battle, because affairs may change during the night, either by the retreat of the enemy, or by the arrival of large reinforcements to enable him to resume the offensive, and counteract your previous dispositions.

XXIX.

When you have resolved to fight a battle, collect your whole force. Dispense with

nothing. A single battalion sometimes decides the day.

XXX.

Nothing is so rash or so contrary to principle, as to make a flank march before an army in position, especially when this army occupies heights at the foot of which you are forced to defile.


XXXI.

When you determine to risk a battle, reserve to yourself every possible chance of success, more particularly if you have to deal with an adversary of superior talent, for if you are beaten, even in the midst of

your magazines and your communications,
woe to the vanquished !

XXXII.

The duty of an advanced guard does not consist in advancing or retiring, but in manœuvring. An advanced guard should be composed of light cavalry, supported by a reserve of heavy, and by battalions of infantry, supported also by artillery. An advanced guard should consist of picked troops, and the general officers, officers and men should be selected for their respective capabilities and knowledge. A corps deficient in instruction, is only an embarrassment to an advanced guard.



XXXIII.

It is contrary to all the usages of war, to allow parks or batteries of artillery to enter a defile, unless you hold the other extremity. In case of retreat the guns will embarrass your movements and be lost. They should be left in position under a sufficient escort until you are master of the opening.

XXXIV.

It should be laid down as a principle never to leave intervals by which the enemy can penetrate between corps formed in order of battle, unless it be to draw him into a snare.

XXXV.

Encampments of the same army should always be formed so as to protect each other.

XXXVI.

*When the enemy's army is covered by a river, upon which he holds several *têtes de pont*, do not attack in front. This would divide your force and expose you to be turned. Approach the river in echelon of columns, in such a manner, that the leading column shall be the only one the enemy can attack, without offering you his flank. In the mean time, let your light troops occupy the bank, and when you have decided on*



the point of passage, rush upon it and fling across your bridge. Observe, that the point of passage should be always at a distance from the leading echelon, in order to deceive the enemy.

XXXVII.

From the moment you are master of a position, which commands the opposite bank, facilities are acquired for effecting the passage of the river; above all, if this position is sufficiently extensive to place upon it artillery in force. This advantage is diminished, if the river is more than three hundred toises, (or six hundred yards) in breadth, because the distance being out of the range of grape, it is easy for the troops which defend the passage to line the bank and get

under cover. Hence it follows that if the grenadiers, ordered to pass the river for the protection of the bridge, should reach the other side, they would be destroyed by the fire of the enemy; because his batteries, placed at the distance of two hundred toises from the landing, are capable of a most destructive effect, although removed above five hundred toises from the batteries of the crossing force. Thus the advantage of the artillery would be exclusively his. For the same reason, the passage is impracticable, unless you succeed in surprizing the enemy, and are protected by an intermediate island, or unless you are able to take advantage of an angle in the river, to establish a cross fire upon his works. In this case the island or angle forms a natural *tête de pont*, and gives the advantage in artillery to the at-


tacking army. When a river is less than sixty toises, (or one hundred and twenty yards) in breadth, and you have a post upon the other side, the troops which are thrown across derive such advantages from the protection of your artillery, that, however small the angle may be, it is impossible for the enemy to prevent the establishment of a bridge. In this case, the most skilful generals, when they have discovered the project of their adversary, and brought their own army to the point of crossing, usually content themselves with opposing the passage of the bridge, by forming a semi-circle round its extremity as round the opening of a defile, and removing to the distance of three or four hundred toises from the fire of the opposite side.

XXXVIII.

It is difficult to prevent an enemy, supplied with pontoons, from crossing a river. When the object of an army, which defends the passage, is to cover a siege, the moment the general has ascertained his inability to oppose the passage, he should take measures to arrive before the enemy, at an intermediate position between the river he defends, and the place he desires to cover.

XXXIX.

In the campaign of 1645, Turenne was attacked with his army before Philipsburg, by a very superior force. There was no bridge here over the Rhine, but he took advantage



of the ground between the river and the place to establish his camp. This should serve as a lesson to engineer officers, not merely in the construction of fortresses, but of *têtes de pont*. A space should always be left between the fortress and the river where an army may form and rally without being obliged to throw itself into the place, and thereby compromise its security. An army retiring upon Mayence before a pursuing enemy, is necessarily compromised; for this reason, because it requires more than a day to pass the bridge, and because the lines of Cassel are too confined to admit an army to remain there without being blocked up. Two hundred toises should have been left between that place and the Rhine. It is essential, that all *têtes de pont* before great rivers, should be con-

structed upon this principle, otherwise they will prove a very inefficient assistance to protect the passage of a retreating army. *Tours de pont* as laid down in our schools, are of use only for small rivers, the passage of which is comparatively short.

XL.

Fortresses are equally useful in offensive and defensive warfare. It is true, they will not in themselves arrest an army, but they are an excellent means of retarding, embarrassing, weakening, and annoying a victorious enemy.

XLI.

There are only two ways of ensuring the

success of a siege. The first, to begin by beating the enemy's army employed to cover the place; forcing it out of the field, and throwing its remains beyond some great natural obstacle, such as a chain of mountains or large river. Having accomplished this object, an army of observation should be placed behind the natural obstacle, until the trenches are finished and the place taken.

But if it be desired to take the place in presence of a relieving army without risking a battle, then the whole materiel and equipment for a siege are necessary to begin with, together with ammunition, and provisions for the presumed period of its duration, and also lines of contravallation and circumvallation, aided by all the localities of heights, woods, marshes, and inundations.

Having no longer occasion to keep up

communications with your depôts, it is now only requisite to hold in check the relieving army. For this purpose, an army of observation should be formed, whose business it is never to lose sight of that of the enemy, and which, while it effectually bars all access to the place, has always time enough to arrive upon his flanks or rear in case he should attempt to steal a march.

It is to be remembered too, that by profiting judiciously by the lines of contravallation, a portion of the besieging army will always be available in giving battle to the approaching enemy.

Upon the same general principle when a place is to be besieged in presence of an enemy's army, it is necessary to cover the siege by lines of *circumvallation*.

If the besieging force is of numerical

strength enough (after leaving a corps before the place four times the amount of the garrison,) to cope with the relieving army, it may remove more than one day's march from the place; but if it is inferior in numbers after providing for the siege as above stated, it should remain only a short day from the spot, in order to fall back upon its lines if necessary, or receive succour in case of attack.

If the investing corps and army of observation are only equal when united to the relieving force, the besieging army should remain entire within, or near its lines, and push the works and the siege with the greatest activity.

XLII.

Fenquière says, that we should never

wait for the enemy in the lines of circumvallation, but that we should go out and attack him. He is in error. There is no authority in war without exception; and it would be dangerous to proscribe the principle of awaiting the enemy within the lines of circumvallation.

XLIII.

Those who proscribe lines of circumvallation, and all the assistance which the science of the engineer can afford, deprive themselves gratuitously of an auxiliary, which is never injurious, almost always useful, and often indispensable. It must be admitted at the same time, that the principles of field fortification require improvement. This important branch of the art of

war has made no progress since the time of the ancients. It is even inferior at this day to what it was two thousand years ago. Engineer officers should be encouraged in bringing this branch of their art to perfection, and in placing it upon a level with the rest.

XLIV.

If circumstances prevent a sufficient garrison being left to defend a fortified town, which contains an hospital and magazines, at least every means should be employed to secure the citadel against a *coup de main*.

XLV.

A fortified place can only protect the gar-

riſon, and arreſt the enemy for a certain time. When this time has elapſed, and the defences are deſtroyed, the gariſon ſhould lay down its arms. All civilized nations are agreed on this point, and there never has been an argument except with reference to the greater or leſs degree of defence which a governor is bound to make before he capitulates. At the ſame time there are generals, Villars among the number, who are of opinion, that a governor ſhould never ſurrender, but that in the laſt extremity he ſhould blow up the fortifications, and take advantage of the night to cut his way through the beſieging army. Where he is unable to blow up the fortifications, he may always retire, they ſay, with his gariſon, and ſave the men.

Officers who have adopted this line of

conduct have often brought off three-fourths of their garrison.

XLVI.

The keys of a fortress are well worth the retirement of the garrison, when it is resolved to yield only on those conditions. On this principle it is always wiser to grant an honourable capitulation to a garrison, which has made a vigorous resistance, than to risk an assault.

XLVII.

Infantry, cavalry, and artillery, are nothing without each other. They should always be so disposed in cantonments, as to assist each other in case of surprize.

XLVIII.

The formation of infantry in line should be always in two ranks, because the length of the musket only admits of an effective fire in this formation. The discharge of the third rank is not only uncertain, but frequently dangerous to the ranks in its front. In drawing up infantry in two ranks, there should be a supernumary behind every fourth or fifth file. A reserve should likewise be placed twenty-five paces in rear of each flank.

XLIX.

The practice of mixing small bodies of infantry and cavalry together, is a bad one,

and attended with many inconveniencies. The cavalry loses its power of action. It becomes fettered in all its movements. Its energy is destroyed : even the infantry itself is compromised, for on the first movement of the cavalry it is left without support. The best mode of protecting cavalry is to cover its flank.

L.

Charges of cavalry are equally useful at the beginning, the middle, and the end of a battle. They should be made always, if possible, on the flanks of the infantry, especially when this last is engaged in front.

LI.

It is the business of cavalry to follow up the victory, and to prevent the beaten enemy from rallying.

LII.

Artillery is more essential to cavalry than to infantry, because cavalry has no fire for its defence, but depends upon the sabre. It is to remedy this deficiency that recourse has been had to horse artillery. Cavalry therefore should never be without cannon, whether when attacking, rallying, or in position.

Handwritten note:
The cavalry should be able to fight the enemy in position.

LIII.

In march or in position, the greater part of the artillery should be with the divisions of infantry and cavalry. The rest should be in reserve. Each gun should have with it three hundred rounds, without including the limber. This is about the complement for two battles.

LIV.

Artillery should always be placed in the most advantageous positions, and as far in front of the line of cavalry and infantry, without compromising the safety of the guns, as possible.

Field batteries should command the whole

country round from the level of the platform. They should on no account be masked on the right and left, but have free range in every direction.

LV.

A general should never put his army into cantonments, when he has the means of collecting supplies of forage and provisions, and of thus providing for the wants of the soldier in the field.

LVI.

A good general, a well organized system, good instruction, and severe discipline, aided by effective establishments, will always make

good troops, independently of the cause for which they fight.

At the same time a love of country, a spirit of enthusiasm, and a sense of national honor, will operate upon young soldiers with advantage.

LVII.

When a nation is without establishments and a military system, it is very difficult to organize an army.

LVIII.

The first qualification of a soldier is fortitude under fatigue and privation. Courage is only the second ; hardship,

poverty and want, are the best school for a soldier.

LIX.

There are five things the soldier should never be without, his firelock, his ammunition, his knapsack, his provisions, (for at least four days,) and his intrenching tool. The knapsack may be reduced to the smallest size possible, but the soldier should always have it with him.

LX.

Every means should be taken to attach the soldier to his colours. This is best accomplished by showing consideration and respect to the old soldier. His pay likewise

should increase with his length of service. It is the height of injustice to give a veteran no greater advantages than a recruit.

LXI.

It is not set speeches at the moment of battle, that render soldiers brave. The veteran scarcely listens to them, and the recruit forgets them at the first discharge. If discourses and harangues are useful, it is during the campaign; to do away unfavourable impressions, to correct false reports, to keep alive a proper spirit in the camp, and to furnish materials and amusement for the bivouac. All printed orders of the day should keep in view these objects.

LXII.

Tents are unfavourable to health. The soldier is best when he bivouacs, because he sleeps with his feet to the fire, which speedily dries the ground on which he lies. A few planks and a morsel of straw shelter him from the wind.

On the other hand, tents are necessary for the superior officers, who have to write and to consult their maps. Tents should therefore be issued to these, with directions to them never to sleep in a house. Tents are always objects of observation to the enemy's staff. They afford information of your numbers, and the ground you occupy, while an army bivouacuating in two or three

lines, is only distinguishable from afar by the smoke which mingles with the clouds. It is impossible to count the number of the fires.

LXIII.

All information obtained from prisoners should be received with caution, and estimated at its real value. A soldier seldom sees any thing beyond his company; and an officer can afford intelligence of little more than the position and the movements of the division to which his regiment belongs. On this account the general of an army should never depend upon the information derived from prisoners, unless it agrees with the reports received from the advanced guards,


in reference to the position, &c. of the enemy.

LXIV.

Nothing is so important in war as an undivided command; for this reason, when war is carried on against a single power, there should be only one army, acting upon one base, and conducted by one chief.

LXV.

The same consequences which have uniformly attended long discussions and councils of war, will follow at all times. They will terminate in the adoption of the worst course, which in war, is always the most timid, or if you will, the most prudent.



The only true wisdom in a general is determined courage.

LXVI.

In war the general alone can judge of certain arrangements. It depends on him alone to conquer difficulties by his own superior talents and resolution.

LXVII.

To authorize generals or other officers to lay down their arms in virtue of a particular capitulation, under any other circumstances than when they are composing the garrison of a fortress, affords a dangerous latitude. It is destructive of all military character in a nation to open such a door to the cowardly,

the weak, or even to the misdirected brave. Great extremities require extraordinary resolution. The more obstinate the resistance of an army, the greater the chances of assistance or of success.

How many seeming impossibilities have been accomplished by men whose only resource was death!

LXVIII.

There is no security for any sovereign, for any nation, or for any general, if officers are permitted to capitulate in the open field, and to lay down their arms in virtue of conditions, favourable to the contracting party, but contrary to the interests of the army at large. To withdraw from danger, and thereby to involve their comrades in

greater peril, is the height of cowardice. Such conduct should be proscribed, declared infamous, and made punishable with death. All generals, officers, and soldiers, who capitulate in battle to save their own lives, should be decimated.

He who gives the order, and those who obey are alike traitors, and deserve capital punishment.

LXIX.

There is but one honourable mode of becoming prisoner of war. That is, by being taken separately; by which is meant, by being cut off entirely, and when we can no longer make use of our arms. In this case there can be no conditions, for honor can


impose none. We yield to an irresistible necessity.

LXX.

The conduct of a general in a conquered country, is full of difficulties. If severe, he irritates and increases the number of his enemies. If lenient, he gives birth to expectations which only render the abuses and vexations inseparable from war, the more intolerable. A victorious general must know how to employ severity, justice, and mildness by turns, if he would allay sedition or prevent it.

LXXI.

Nothing can excuse a general who takes



advantage of the knowledge acquired in the service of his country, to deliver up her frontier and her towns to foreigners. This is a crime reprobated by every principle of religion, morality, and honor.

LXXII.

A general in chief, has no right to shelter his mistakes in war under cover of his sovereign, or of a minister, when these are both distant from the scene of operation, and must consequently be either ill informed or wholly ignorant of the actual state of things.

Hence it follows, that every general is culpable who undertakes the execution of a plan which he considers faulty. It is his duty to represent his reasons, to insist upon

MILITARY MAXIMS.

A general, in short to give in his resistance, rather than allow himself to be sacrificed to the increment of his army's ruin. A chief who fights a battle without superior orders, with the result, is equally blamable.

In the first-mentioned case, the general is in a wrong position; because a blind obedience is due only to a military command given by a superior present on the spot at the moment of action. Being in possession of the real state of things, the superior has it then in his power to afford the necessary explanations to the person who executes his orders.

But supposing a general in chief to receive a positive order from his sovereign, directing him to fight a battle, with the further injunction, to yield to his adversary.



and allow himself to be defeated—ought he to obey it? No. If the general should be able to comprehend the meaning or utility of such an order, he should execute it, otherwise, he should refuse to obey it.

LXXIII.

The first qualification in a general in chief, is a cool head—that is, a head which receives just impressions, and estimates things and objects at their real value. He must not allow himself to be elated by good news, or depressed by bad.

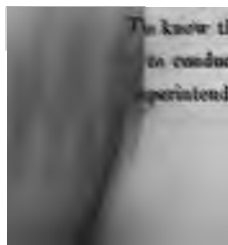
The impressions he receives either successively or simultaneously in the course of the day, should be so classed as to take up only the exact place in his mind which they deserve to occupy; since it is upon a just

LXXIII. MILITARY MAXIMS.

It is the consequence of the weight of these maxims, that the power of nations and of their armaments depends on the moral and political and morally and politically. They see every thing through a moral and political medium. They raise up a moral and political issue on every slight occasion, and on every slight political occurrence a dramatic interest. But whatever knowledge, or science, or courage, or other good qualities that men may possess, nature has not formed them for the command of armies, or the direction of great military operations.

LXXIV.

To know the country thoroughly; to be
to conduct a *reconnoissance* with skill;
superintend the transmission of orders



promptly ; to lay down the most complicated movements intelligibly, but in a few words and with simplicity ; these are the leading qualifications which should distinguish an officer selected for the head of the staff.

LXXV.

A commandant of artillery should understand well the general principles of each branch of the service, since he is called upon to supply arms and ammunition to the different corps of which it is composed. His correspondence with the commanding officers of artillery at the advanced posts, should put him in possession of all the movements of the army, and the disposition and management of the great park of artillery should depend upon this information.

LXXVI.

To reconnoitre accurately defiles and fords of every description. To provide guides that may be depended on. To interrogate the curé and postmaster. To establish rapidly a good understanding with the inhabitants. To send out spies. To intercept public and private letters. To translate and analyze their contents. In a word, to be able to answer every question of the general in chief when he arrives at the head of the army; these are the qualities which distinguish a good general of advanced posts.

LXXVII.

Generals in chief must be guided by their own experience or their genius. Tactics, evolutions, the duties and knowledge of an engineer or artillery officer may be learned in treatises, but the science of strategy is only to be acquired by experience, and by studying the campaigns of all the great captains.

Gustavus Adolphus, Turenne, and Frederick, as well as Alexander, Hannibal and Cæsar, have all acted upon the same principles. These have been—to keep their forces united—to leave no weak part unguarded—to seize with rapidity on important points.

Such are the principles which lead to victory, and which, by inspiring terror at

the reputation of your arms, will at once maintain fidelity, and secure subjection.

LXXVIII.

Peruse again and again the campaigns of Alexander, Hannibal, Cæsar, Gustavus Adolphus, Turenne, Eugene, and Frederick. Model yourself upon them. This is the only means of becoming a great captain, and of acquiring the secret of the art of war. Your own genius will be enlightened and improved by this study, and you will learn to reject all maxims foreign to the principles of these great commanders.


N O T E S
UPON
THE MAXIMS
OF
NAPOLEON.

IN forming a collection of these maxims which have directed the military operations of the greatest captain in modern times, my object has been, to prove useful to such young officers as desire to acquire a knowledge of the art of war by studying the numerous campaigns of Gustavus Adolphus, Turenne, Frederick, and Napoleon.

These great men have all been governed

by the same principles, and it is by applying these principles to the perusal of their respective campaigns, that every military man will recognize their wisdom, and make such use of them hereafter, as his own particular genius shall point out.

And here, perhaps, my task might have been considered finished ; but perceiving how incomplete the collection was alone, I have endeavoured to supply the deficiency by having recourse for farther illustration to the memoirs of Montécuculli, and the instructions of Frederick to his generals. The analogy of their principles with those of Napoleon, has convinced me that the art of war is susceptible of two points of view. One which relates entirely to the acquirements and genius of the general, the other which refers to matters of detail.



The first is the same in all ages, and with all nations, whatever be the arms with which they fight. Hence it follows, that great commanders have been governed by the same principles in all times.

The business of detail on the contrary is under the controul of existing circumstances. It varies with the character of a people and the quality of their arms.

It is with a view to impress the justice of this remark, that I have sought for facts in different periods of history, to illustrate these maxims, and to prove, that nothing is *problematical* in war; but that failure and success in military operations depend almost always on the natural genius and science of the chief.



NOTES.

MAXIM I.

Page 5. The frontiers of states are either large rivers or chains of mountains, or deserts. Of all these obstacles to the march of an army, the most difficult to overcome is the desert; mountains come next, and large rivers occupy the third place. . . .

Napoleon in his military career, appears to have been called upon to surmount every species of difficulty peculiar to aggressive warfare.

In Egypt he traversed deserts, and vanquished and destroyed the Mamelukes, so celebrated for their address and courage.

His genius knew how to accommodate itself to all the dangers of this distant enterprize, in a country ill adapted to supply the wants of his troops.

In the conquest of Italy, he twice crossed the Alps by the most difficult passes, and at a season which rendered this undertaking still more formidable. In three months he passed the Pyrenees, beat and dispersed four Spanish armies. In short, from the Rhine to the Borysthenes, no natural obstacle could be found to arrest the rapid march of his victorious army.

II.

Page 6. In forming the plan of a campaign, it is essential to foresee every thing the enemy may do, and to be prepared with the necessary means to counteract it. Plans of campaign may be modified,



ad infinitum, according to circumstances, the genius of the general, the character of the troops, and the features of the country.

Sometimes we see a hazardous campaign succeed, the plan of which is directly at variance with the principles of the art of war. But this success depends generally on the caprice of fortune, or upon faults committed by the enemy, two things upon which a general must never count. Sometimes the plan of a campaign runs the risk of failing at the outset, if opposed by an adversary who acts at first on the defensive, and then suddenly seizing the initiative, surprises, by the skilfulness of his manœuvres. Such was the fate of the plan laid down by the Anglic council, for the campaign of 1796, under the command of

Marshal Wurmser. From his great numerical superiority, the Marshal had calculated on the entire destruction of the French army, by cutting off its retreat. He founded his operations on the defensive attitude of his adversary, who was posted on the line of the Adige, and had to cover the siege of Mantua, as well as central and lower Italy.

Wurmser, supposing the French army fixed in the neighbourhood of Mantua, divided his force into three corps which marched separately, intending to unite at that place. Napoleon having penetrated the design of the Austrian general felt all the advantage to be derived from striking the first blow against an army, divided into three corps without any relative communications. He hastened therefore to raise the siege of Mantua, assembled the whole

of his forces and by this means became superior to the imperialists, whose divisions he attacked and beat in detail. Thus, Wurmser, who fancied he had only to march to certain victory, saw himself compelled after a ten days campaign, to retire with the remains of his army into the Tyrol, after a loss of twenty-five thousand men in killed and wounded, fifteen thousand prisoners, nine stand of colours, and seventy pieces of cannon. This proves that, nothing is so difficult as to prescribe beforehand to a general the line of conduct he shall pursue during the course of a campaign. Success must often depend on circumstances that cannot be foreseen; and it should be remembered likewise, that nothing cramps so much the efforts of genius as compelling the head of an army to be governed by any will but his own.

III.

Page 6. An army which undertakes the conquest of a country has either its two wings resting upon neutral territories, or upon great natural obstacles, such as rivers or chains of mountains. It happens in some cases that only one wing is so supported, and in others that both are exposed.—In the first instance
 But in all these cases it is necessary every five or six days, to have a strong post or an intrenched position upon the line of march

These general principles in the art of war were entirely unknown or lost sight of in the middle ages. The crusaders, in their incursions into Palestine, appear to have had no object but to fight and to conquer, so little pains did they take to profit by their victories. Hence innumerable armies pe-

rished in Syria, without any other advantage, than that derived from the momentary success obtained by superior numbers.

It was by the neglect of these principles also, that Charles the Twelfth, abandoning his line of operation and all communication with Sweden, threw himself into the Ukraine, and lost the greater part of his army by the fatigues of a winter campaign in a barren country destitute of resources.

Defeated at Pultawa, he was reduced to seek refuge in Turkey, after crossing the Nieper with the remains of his army, diminished to little more than one thousand men.

Gustavus Adolphus was the first who brought back the art of war to its true principles. His operations in Germany were bold, rapid, and well executed. He

made success at all times conducive to future security, and established his line of operation so as to prevent the possibility of any interruption in his communications with Sweden. His campaigns form a new era in the art of war.

IV.

Page 8. When the conquest of a country is undertaken by two or three armies, which have each their separate line of operation, until they arrive at a point fixed upon for their concentration, it should be laid down as a principle, that the junction should never take place near the enemy. . . .

In the campaign of 1757, Frederick, marching to the conquest of Bohemia with two armies, which had each their separate line of operation, succeeded notwithstand-

ing, in uniting them in sight of the Duke of Loraine, who covered Prague with the imperial army. The success of this march however, depended entirely on the inaction of the Duke, who at the head of seventy thousand men, did nothing to prevent the junction of the two Prussian armies.

V.

Page 9. All wars should be governed by certain principles, for every war should have a definite object, and be conducted according to the rules of art.


It was a saying of Marshal Villars, that when war is decided on, it is necessary to have exact information of the number of the troops the enemy can bring into the field, since it is impossible to lay down any

solid plan of offensive or defensive operation without an accurate knowledge of what you have to expect and fear. When the first shot is fired, no one can calculate what will be the issue of the war. It is therefore, of vast importance to reflect maturely before we begin it. When once however, this is decided, the Marshal observes, that the boldest and most extended plans are generally the wisest and the most successful. "When we are determined upon war, he adds, we should carry it on vigorously and without trifling."

VI.

Page 9. At the commencement of a campaign, *to advance, or not to advance*, is a matter for grave consideration, but when once the offensive has been assumed it must be sustained to the last extremity.

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Marshal Saxe remarks, that no retreats are so favorable as those which are made before a languid and unenterprizing enemy, for when he pursues with vigour, the retreat soon degenerates into a route. Upon this principle it is a great error, says the Marshal, to adhere to the proverb which recommends us to build a bridge of gold for a retreating enemy. No.—Follow him up with spirit and he is destroyed.

VII.

Page 10. An army should be ready every day, every night, and at all times of the day and night, to oppose all the resistance of which it is capable.

The following maxims, taken from the

memoirs of Montecuculli, appear to me well suited to this place, and calculated to form a useful commentary on the general principles laid down in the preceding observations:

I.

When war has been once decided on, the moment is past for doubts and scruples. On the contrary, we are bound to hope that all the evil which may ensue, will not. That Providence, or our own wisdom, may avert it, or that the want of talent on the part of the enemy, may prevent him from benefiting by it. The first security for success is to confer the command on one individual. When the authority is divided, opinions are divided likewise, and the operations are deprived of

that *ensemble*, which is the first essential to victory. Besides, when an enterprize is common to many, and not confined to a single person, it is conducted without vigour, and less interest is attached to the result.


After having strictly conformed to all the rules of war, and satisfied ourselves that nothing has been omitted to ensure eventual success, we must then leave the issue in the hands of Providence, and repose ourselves tranquilly in the decision of a higher power.

Let what will arrive, it is the part of a general in chief to remain firm and constant in his purposes: he must be equally superior to elation in prosperity and depression in adversity; for in war, good and bad fortune succeed each other by turns, and form the ebb and flow of military operations.

2.

When your own army is strong and inured to service, and that of the enemy weak and consisting of new levies, or of troops enervated by long inaction, then you should exert every means to bring him to battle.

If, on the other hand, the adversary has the advantage in troops, a decisive combat is to be avoided, and you must be content to impede his progress, by encamping advantageously and fortifying favorable passes. When armies are nearly equal, it is desirable *not* to avoid a battle, but only to fight one to advantage. For this purpose care should be taken to encamp always in front of the enemy, to move when he moves, and occupy the heights and advantageous grounds that



lie upon his line of march; to seize upon all the buildings and roads adjoining to his camp, and post yourself advantageously in the places by which he must pass. It is always something gained to make *him* lose time, to thwart his designs, or to retard their progress and execution. If however, an army is altogether inferior to that of the enemy, and there is no possibility of manœuvring against him with success, then the campaign must be abandoned, and the troops must retire into the fortresses.

3.

The first object of a general in chief in the moment of battle, should be to secure the flanks of his army. It is true that natural positions may be found to effect this

object, but these positions being fixed and immovable in themselves, they are only advantageous to a general who is prepared to wait the shock of the enemy, and not to one who marches to the attack.

A general can therefore rely only on the just disposition of his troops, to enable him to repel any attempt the adversary may make upon the front or flanks, or rear of his army.

If one flank of an army rests upon a river, or an impassable ravine, the whole of the cavalry should be posted with the other wing, in order to envelop the enemy more easily by its superiority in numbers.

If the enemy has his flanks supported by woods, light cavalry or infantry should be dispatched to attack him in flank or in rear during the heat of the battle. If practica-

ble also, an attack should be made upon the baggage to add to his confusion.

If you desire to beat the enemy's left with your right wing, or his right with your left wing, the wing with which you attack should be reinforced by the *élite* of your army. At the same moment the other wing should be refused, and the attacking wing brought rapidly forward so as to overwhelm the enemy. If the nature of the ground admits, he should be approached by stealth, and attacked before he is on his guard. If any signs of fear are discoverable in the enemy, and which are always to be detected by confusion, or disorder in his movements, he should be pursued immediately without allowing him time to recover himself. It is now the cavalry should be brought into

action, and manœuvre so as to cut off his artillery and baggage.

4.

The order of march should always be subservient to the order of battle, which last should be arranged before hand. The march of an army is always well regulated when it is governed by the distance to be accomplished, and by the time required for its performance. The front of the column of march should be diminished or increased according to the nature of the country, taking care that the artillery always proceeds by the main road.

When a river is to be passed, the artillery should be placed in battery upon the bank opposite the point of crossing.

It is a great advantage, when a river forms a sweep or angle, and when a ford is to be found near the place where you wish to effect a passage. As the construction of the bridge proceeds, infantry should be brought to cover the workmen by keeping up a fire on the opposite bank, but the moment it is finished, a corps of infantry and cavalry and some field pieces should be pushed across. The infantry should entrench itself immediately at the head of the bridge, and it is prudent, moreover, to fortify on the same side of the river, in order to protect the bridge, in case the enemy should venture an offensive movement.

The advanced guard of an army should be always provided with trusty guides and with a corps of pioneers. The first to point

at the best times, the second is rather neglected more practices.

If the army marches in detachments, the commander of each detachment should be furnished with the name of the place in writing, where the whole are to be reassembled. The place should be sufficiently removed from the enemy, to prevent him from occupying it before the junction of all the detachments. To this end it is of importance to keep the name a secret.

From the moment an army approaches the enemy, it should march in the order in which it is intended to fight. If any thing is to be apprehended, precautions are necessary in proportion to the degree of the danger. When a defile is to be passed, the troops should be halted beyond the extremity, until the whole army has quitted the defile.



In order to conceal the movements of an army, it is necessary to march by night, through woods and vallies, by the most retired roads and out of reach of all inhabited places. No fires should be allowed; and to favor the design still more, the troops should move by verbal order. When the object of the march is to carry a post, or to succour a place that is besieged, the advanced guard should march within musket shot of the main body, because then you are prepared for an immediate attack, and ready to overthrow all before you.

When a march is made to force a pass guarded by the enemy, it is desirable to make a feint upon one point, while by a rapid movement you bring your real attack to bear upon another.

Sometimes success is obtained by pretending to fall back upon the original line of march, and by a sudden countermarch seizing upon the pass, before the enemy is able to reoccupy it. Some generals have gained their point by manœuvring so as to deceive the enemy, while a detachment under the cover of high grounds has surprized the passage by a stolen march. The enemy being engaged in watching the movements of the main body, the detachment has an opportunity of entrenching itself in its new position.

5.

An army regulates its mode of encampment according to the greater or less degree of precaution which circumstances



require. In a friend's country, the troops are divided to afford better accommodation and supplies. But with the enemy in front, an army encamps always in order of battle. With this view, it is of the last importance to cover one part of the camp as far as practicable, by natural defences, such as a river, a chain of rocks, or a ravine. Care should be taken also, that the camp is not commanded, and that there is no obstacle to a free communication between the different corps, and which can prevent the troops from mutually succouring each other.

When an army occupies a fixed camp, it is necessary to be well supplied with provisions and ammunition, or at least that these should be within certain reach and easily obtained. To ensure this, the line of communication

must be well established, and care taken not to leave an enemy's fortress in your rear.

When an army is established in winter quarters, its safety is best secured either by fortifying a camp, (for which purpose a spot should be selected near a large commercial town, or a river affording facility of transport,) or by distributing it in close cantonments; so that the troops should be near together, and capable of affording each other mutual support.

The winter quarters of an army should be protected likewise, by constructing small covered works on all the lines of approach to the cantonments, and by posting advanced guards of cavalry to observe the motions of the enemy.

6.

A battle is to be sought, when there is reason to hope for victory, or when an army runs the risk of being ruined without fighting; also when a besieged place is to be relieved, or when you desire to prevent a reinforcement from reaching the enemy. Battles are useful likewise, when we wish to profit by a favorable opportunity which offers, to secure a certain advantage; such as seizing upon an undefended point or pass, attacking the enemy when he has committed a fault, or when some misunderstanding among his generals favors the undertaking.

If an enemy declines an engagement, he may be compelled to it, either by besieging a place of importance, or by falling upon

him unawares, and when he cannot easily effect his retreat. Or, (after pretending to retire,) by making a rapid countermarch, attacking him vigorously and forcing him to action.

The different circumstances under which a battle should be avoided or declined, are, when there is greater danger to be apprehended from defeat, than advantage to be derived from victory; when you are very inferior to your adversary in numbers, and are expecting reinforcements; above all, when the enemy is advantageously posted, or when he is contributing to his own ruin by some inherent defect in his position, or by the errors and divisions of his generals.

To gain a battle, each arm must be advantageously posted and have the means of engaging to its front and flank. The wings

must be protected by natural obstacles where these present themselves, or by having recourse when necessary, to the aid of art.

The troops must be able to assist each other without confusion, and care must be taken that the broken corps do not fall back upon, and overthrow the rest. Above all, the intervals between the different bodies must be sufficiently small to prevent the enemy from penetrating, for in that case you would be obliged to employ your reserves, and run the risk of being entirely overwhelmed.

Sometimes victory is obtained by creating a diversion in the middle of a battle, or even by depriving the soldier of all hope of retreat, and placing him in a situation where he is reduced to the necessity, either to conquer or die. At the commencement of a battle,

soldier with courage, but if you are well posted and your artillery advantageously placed, then wait for him with determination; remembering always to fight resolutely to succour opportunely those who require it and never to commit your reserves except in the last extremity, and even then, to preserve some support behind which the broken corps may rally.

When it is necessary to attack with your whole force, the battle should commence towards evening, because then, whatever be the issue, night will arrive to separate the combatants before your troops are exhausted. By this means an opportunity

During an action, the general in chief should occupy some spot from whence he can, as far as possible, overlook his whole army. He should be informed immediately of every thing that passes in the different divisions. He should be ready, in order to render success more complete, to operate with fresh troops upon those points where the enemy is giving way, and also to reinforce his own corps wherever they are inclined to yield. When the enemy is beaten, he must pursue him instantly, without giving him a moment to rally; on the other hand, if he is himself defeated or despairs of victory, he must retire betimes in the best possible order.

7.

It shows great talent in a general to bring troops who are prepared for action, into collision with those who are not ; for example, fresh troops against those which are exhausted, brave and disciplined men against recruits. He must likewise be ready always to fall with his army upon a weak or detached corps, to follow the track of the enemy, and charge him among defiles before he can face about and get into position.

8.

A position is good when the different arms are so placed, as to be engaged with advantage, and without any remaining un-

employed. . If you are superior in cavalry, positions are to be sought in plains and open ground. If in infantry, in an enclosed and covered country. If inferior in numbers, in confined and narrow places, if superior, in a spacious and extensive field. With a very inferior army, a difficult pass must be selected to occupy and fortify..

9.

In order to obtain every possible advantage from a diversion, we should ascertain first, that the country in which it is to be created, is easily penetrated. A diversion should be made vigorously and on those points where it is calculated to do the greatest mischief to the enemy.



10.

To make war with success, the following principles should never be departed from :

To be superior to your enemy in numbers, as well as in *morale*—to fight battles in order to spread terror in the country—to divide your army into as many corps as may be effected without risk, in order to undertake several objects at the same time—to treat *well* those who yield, to *ill* treat those who resist—to secure your rear, and occupy and strengthen yourself at the outset in some post which shall serve as a central base point for the support of your future movements—to make yourself master of the great rivers and principal passes, and to establish your line of communication by

getting possession of the fortresses by laying siege to them, and of the open country, by giving battle; for it is vain to expect that conquests are to be atchieved without combats, although when the victory is won they will be best maintained by uniting mildness with valour.

VIII.

Page 12. A general in chief should ask himself several times in the day, what! if the enemy were to appear now in my front, or on my right, or my left!

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In the campaign of 1758, the position of the Prussian army at Hohen Kirk, being commanded by the batteries of the enemy who occupied all the heights, was eminently defective. Notwithstanding, Frederick who saw his rear menaced by the corps of Lau-

don, remained six days in his camp without seeking to correct its position. It would seem indeed that he was ignorant of his real danger, for marshal Daun having manœuvred during the night in order to attack at day-break, surprized the Prussians in their lines before they were able to defend themselves, and by this means surrounded them completely.

Frederick succeeded, however, in effecting his retreat with regularity, but not without the loss of ten thousand men, many general officers, and almost all his artillery.

If Marshal Daun had followed up his victory with greater boldness, the king of Prussia would never have been able to rally his army. On this occasion Frederick's good fortune balanced his imprudence.

Marshal Saxe remarks, that there is more

talent than is dreamt of in bad dispositions, if we possess the art of converting them into good ones, when the favorable moment arrives. Nothing astonishes the enemy so much as this manœuvre. He has counted upon *something*. All his arrangements have been founded upon it accordingly—and at the moment of attack, it escapes him! “I must repeat, says the marshal, there is nothing that so completely disconcerts an enemy as this, or engages him to commit so many errors; for it follows, that if he does *not* change his dispositions, he is beaten; and if he *does* change them, in presence of his adversary, he is equally undone.”

It seems to me, however, that a general who should rest the success of a battle upon such a principle, would be more likely to lose than to gain by it; for if he had to

deal with a skilful adversary and an alert tactician, the latter would find time to take advantage of the previous bad dispositions before he would be able to remedy them.

IX.

Page 12. The strength of an army, like the power in mechanics, is estimated by multiplying the mass by the rapidity

Rapidity, says Montecuculli, is of importance in concealing the movements of an army, because it leaves no time to divulge the intention of its chief. It is therefore an advantage to attack the enemy unexpectedly, to take him off his guard, to surprize him, and let him feel the thunder before he sees the flash. But if too great

celerity exhausts your troops, while on the other hand, delay deprives you of the favorable moment, you must weigh the advantage against the disadvantage, and choose between. Marshal Villars observes, that in war everything depends upon being able to deceive the enemy, and having once gained this point, in never allowing him time to recover himself. Villars has united practice to precept. His bold and rapid marches were almost always crowned with success. It was the opinion of Frederick that all wars should be short and rapid; because a long war insensibly relaxes discipline, depopulates the state, and exhausts its resources.

X.

Page 13. When an army is inferior in number, inferior in cavalry, and in artillery, it is essential to avoid a general action.

The campaign of 1814 in France was skilfully executed upon these principles. Napoleon, with an army inferior in number, an army discouraged by the disastrous retreats of Moscow and of Leipzig, and still more by the presence of the enemy in the French territory, contrived notwithstanding, to supply his vast inequality of force by the rapidity and combination of his movements. By the success obtained at Champaubert, Montmirail, Montereau, and Rheims, he had already begun to restore the *morale* of the French army. The numerous recruits of which it was composed, had al-

ready acquired that steadiness, of which the old regiments afforded them an example, when the capture of Paris and the astonishing revolution it produced, compelled Napoleon to lay down his arms.

But this consequence resulted rather from the force of circumstances than from any absolute necessity; for Napoleon by carrying his army to the other side of the Loire might easily have formed a junction with the armies of the Alps and Pyrenees, and have re-appeared on the field of battle, at the head of a hundred thousand men. Such a force would have amply sufficed to re-establish the chances of war in his favor, more especially as the armies of the allied sovereigns were obliged to manœuvre upon the French territory with all the strong places of Italy and France in their rear.

XI.


Page 13. To act upon lines far removed from each other and without communication, is to commit a fault, which always gives birth to a second. The detached column has only its orders for the first day. Its operations on the following day depend upon what may have happened to the main body. Thus the column on any sudden emergency, either loses time in waiting for orders, or acts without them, and at hazard.

The Austrian army, commanded by Field Marshal Alvinzi, was divided into two corps, destined to act independently, till they should accomplish their junction before Mantua. The first of these corps, consisting of forty-five thousand men, was under the orders of Alvinzi. It was to debouch by Monte Baldo, upon the positions occupied

by the French army on the Adige. The second corps, commanded by General Provéra, was destined to act upon the lower Adige, and to raise the blockade of Mantua. Napoleon, informed of the enemy's movements, but not entirely comprehending his projects, confined himself to concentrating his masses and giving orders to the troops to hold themselves in readiness to manœuvre. In the meantime fresh information satisfied the general in chief of the French army, that the corps which had debouched by La Coronna, over Monte Baldo, was endeavouring to form a junction with its cavalry and artillery; both which, having crossed the Adige at Dolce, were directing their march upon the plateau of Rivoli, by the great road leading by Incanole.

Napoleon immediately foresaw, that by

having possession of the plateau, he should be able to prevent this junction, and obtain all the advantages of the initiative. He accordingly put his troops in motion, and at two o'clock in the morning occupied that important position. Once master of the point fixed upon for the junction of the Austrian columns, success followed all his dispositions. He repulsed every attack, made seven thousand prisoners, and took several standards, and twelve pieces of cannon. At two o'clock in the afternoon, the battle of Rivoli was already gained, when Napoleon learning that general Provera had passed the Adige at Anghiari, and was directing his march upon Mantua, left to his generals the charge of following up the retreat of Alvinzi, and placed himself at



the head of a division for the purpose of defeating the designs of Provera.


By a rapid march, he again succeeded in the initiatory movement, and in preventing the garrison of Mantua from uniting its force with the relieving army. The corps charged with the blockade, eager to distinguish itself under the eyes of the conqueror of Rivoli, compelled the garrison to retire into the place, while the division of Victor, forgetful of the fatigues of a forced march attacked the relieving army in front. At this moment a sortie from the lines of St. George, took him in flank, and the corps of Augereau which had followed the march of the Austrian general, attacked him in rear. Provera, surrounded on all sides, capitulated. The result of these two battles cost the Austrians three thousand

men in killed and wounded, twenty-two thousand prisoners, twenty-four standards, and forty-six pieces of cannon.

XII.

Page 15. An army should have only one line of operation. This should be preserved with care, and only abandoned in the last extremity.

The line of communication, says Montecuculli, must be certain and well established, for every army that acts from a distant base, and is not careful to keep this line perfectly open, marches upon a precipice. It moves to certain ruin, as may be seen by an infinity of examples. In fact, if the road by which provisions, ammunition, and reinforcements are to be brought up, is not entirely secured: if the magazines, the



hospitals, the depôts of arms, and the places of supply are not fixed, and commodiously situated, not only the army cannot keep the field, but it will be exposed to the greatest dangers.


XIII.

Page 15. The distances which may be allowed between the divisions of an army on the march, must depend on the localities, or circumstances, and on the object in view.

When an army moves at a distance from the enemy, the columns may be disposed along the road so as to favour the artillery and baggage. But when it is marching into action, the different corps must be formed in close columns in order of battle. The generals must take care that the heads of the columns which are to attack together,

do not outstep each other, and that in approaching the field of action, they preserve the relative intervals required for deployment.

The marches that are made preparatory to a battle, require, says Frederick, the greatest precaution. With this view he recommends his generals to be particularly on their guard, and to reconnoitre the ground at successive distances, in order to secure the initiative by occupying those positions most calculated to favour an attack. On a retreat, it is the opinion of many generals that an army should concentrate its forces, and march in close columns if it is still strong enough to resume the offensive ; for by this means it is easy to form the line when a favourable opportunity presents itself either for holding the enemy in check,



or for attacking him if he is not in a situation to accept battle.

Such was Moreau's retreat after the passage of the Adda by the Austro Russian army. The French general after having covered the evacuation of Milan, took up a position between the Po and the Tenaro.

His camp rested upon Alexandria and Valentia, two capital fortresses, and had the advantage of covering the roads to Turin and Savona, by which he could effect his retreat in case he was unable to accomplish a junction with the *corps d'armes* of Macdonald, who had been ordered to quit the kingdom of Naples, and hasten his march into Tuscany.

Forced to abandon this position in consequence of the insurrection in Piedmont and Tuscany, Moreau retired upon Asti,

where he learned that his communication with the river of Genoa, had just been cut off by the capture of Ceva. After several ineffectual attempts to re-take this place, he saw that his only safety depended upon throwing himself into the mountains.

To effect this object, he directed the whole of his battering train, and heavy baggage by the Col de Fenestrelle upon France; then opening himself a way over the St. Bernard, he gained Loano with his light artillery and the small proportion of field equipment he had been able to preserve.

By this skilful movement, he not only retained his communications with France, but was enabled to observe the motions of the army from Naples, and to facilitate his junction with it by directing the whole of



his force upon the points necessary for that purpose.

Macdonald in the meantime, whose only chance of success depended on concentrating his little army, neglected this precaution, and was beaten in three successive actions at the Trebia.

By this retardment of his march, he rendered all Moreau's measures to unite the two armies in the plains of the Po useless, and his retreat after his brilliant but fruitless efforts at the Trebia, defeated the other dispositions also which the former had made to come to his support. After all, however, the inactivity of Marshal Souwarrow enabled the French general to accomplish his junction with the remains of the army from Naples. Moreau then concentrated his whole force upon the Apennines, and placed himself in a

situation to defend the important positions of Liguria, until the chances of war should afford him an opportunity of resuming the offensive.

When after a decisive battle, an army has lost its artillery and equipments, and is consequently no longer in a state to resume the offensive, or even to arrest the pursuit of the enemy, it would seem most desirable to divide what remains into several corps, and order them to march by separate and distant routes upon the base of operation, and throw themselves into the fortresses. This is the only means of safety, for the enemy uncertain as to the precise direction taken by the vanquished army, is ignorant in the first instance which corps to pursue, and it is in this moment of indecision that a march is gained upon him. Besides the move-



ments of a small body being so much easier than those of a larger one, these separate lines of march are all in favour of a retreating army.

XIV.

Page 15. Among mountains, a great number of positions are always to be found, very strong in themselves, and which it is dangerous to attack. The science of this mode of warfare consists in occupying camps on the flanks, or in the rear of the enemy.

During the campaign of 1793, in the Maritime Alps, the French army under the orders of general Brunét, did all in its power to get possession of the camps at Rans and at Fourches, by an attack in front. But these useless efforts served only to increase the courage of the Pied-

montese, and to destroy the *élite* of the grenadiers of the republican army. The manœuvres by which Napoleon, without fighting, compelled the enemy to evacuate these positions in 1796, suffice to establish the truth of these principles, and to prove how much success in war depends upon the genius of the general, as well as on the courage of the soldier.

XV.

Page 16. The first consideration with a general who offers battle, should be the glory and honour of his arms. The safety and preservation of his men is only the second.

In 1645, the French army under the orders of the prince of Condé, was on the march to lay siege to Nordlingen, when it was discovered that Count Merci who com-



manded the Bavarians, had foreseen this intention, and had entrenched himself in a strong position which defended Nordlingen at the same time that it covered Donawerth.

Notwithstanding the favourable position of the enemy, Condé ordered the attack. The combat was terrible. All the infantry in the centre and on the right, after being successively engaged, was routed and dispersed, in spite of the efforts of the cavalry and the reserve, which were likewise carried away with the fugitives. The battle was lost. Condé in despair, having no longer either centre or right to depend upon, directed his march to the left where Turenne was still engaged. This perseverance reanimated the ardour of the troops. They broke the right wing of the enemy, and Turenne by a change of front, returned to the attack

upon his centre—Night too, favoured the boldness of Condé. An entire corps of Bavarians fancying themselves cut off, laid down their arms, and the obstinacy of the French general in this struggle for victory, was repaid by possession of the field of battle, together with a great number of prisoners, and almost all the enemy's artillery. The Bavarian army beat a retreat, and the next day Nordlingen capitulated.

XVI.

Page 17. It is an approved maxim in war, never to do what the enemy wishes you to do, for this reason alone, *because he wishes it*. A field of battle therefore, which he has previously studied and reconnoitered should be avoided.

It was without due regard to this principle, that Marshal Villeroi on assuming the



command of the army of Italy during the campaign of 1701, attacked with unwarrantable presumption, Prince Eugene of Savoy in his entrenched position of Chiari, on the Oglio. The French generals, Catinat among the rest, considered the post unsailable, but Villeroi insisted, and the result of this otherwise unimportant battle was the loss of the *élite* of the French army. It would have been greater still, but for Catinat's exertions.

It was by neglecting the same principle, that the Prince of Condé, in the campaign of 1644, failed in all his attacks upon the entrenched position of the Bavarian army. The Count Merci who commanded the latter, had drawn up his cavalry skilfully upon the plain, resting upon Freyberg, while his infantry occupied the mountain.

After many fruitless attempts, the French
 abandoning the responsibility of attacking
 the enemy, began to retreat in confusion
 about the middle of the month. After pursuing
 him he found his discomfited remains be-
 yond the River Minho.

XVII.

Page 12. In a war of attrition and maneuver, if
 we could make a battle with a superior army, it is
 necessary to retreat more than once, and carry a
 great retentive position.

The campaign of the French and Spanish
 army commanded by the Duke of Berwick,
 against the Portuguese, in the year 1706,
 affords a good lesson on this subject. The
 two armies made about the tour of Spain.
 They began the campaign near Badajoz.



and after manœuvring across both Castilles, finished it in the kingdoms of Valencia and Murcia. The Duke of Berwick encamped his army eighty-five times, and although the campaign passed without a general action, he took about ten thousand prisoners from the enemy. Marshal Turenne also made a fine campaign of manœuvre against the Count Montecuculli, in 1675.

The imperial army having made its dispositions to pass the Rhine at Strasburg, Turenne used all diligence, and throwing a bridge over the river near the village of Ottenheim, three leagues below Strasburg, he crossed with the French army and encamped close to the little town of Velstet which he occupied. This position covered the bridge of Strasburg, so that by this

manceuvre Turenne deprived the enemy of all approach to that city.

Upon this, Montecuculli made a movement with his whole army, threatening the bridge at Ottenheim, by which the French received their provisions from upper Alsace.

As soon as Turenne discovered the design of the enemy, he made a rapid march with his whole force upon the village of Altenheim. This intermediate position between the two bridges which he wished to preserve, gave him the advantage of being able to succour either of these posts before the enemy had time to carry them. Montecuculli seeing that any successful attack upon the bridges was not to be expected, resolved to pass the Rhine below Strasburg, and with this view returned to his first position at Offenbourg. Marshal Turenne,

who followed all the movements of the Austrian army, brought back his army also to Vilstet.

In the meantime, this attempt of the enemy having convinced the French general of the danger to which his bridge had exposed him, removed it nearer to that of Strasburg, in order to diminish the extent of ground he had to defend.

Montecuculli having commanded the magistrates of Strasburg to collect materials for a bridge, moved to Scherzheim to receive them, but Turenne again defeated his projects by taking a position at Freistett, where he occupied the islands of the Rhine, and immediately constructed a stockade.

Thus it was, that during the whole of this campaign, Turenne succeeded in gaining the initiative of the enemy, and obliging

him to follow his movements. He succeeded also by a rapid march in cutting off Montecuculli from the town of Offenburg, from whence he drew his supplies, and would no doubt have prevented the Austrian general from effecting his junction with the corps of Caprara, had not a cannon shot terminated this great man's life.

XVIII.

Page 18. A general of ordinary talent, occupying a bad position, and surprized by a superior force, seeks his safety in retreat; but a great captain supplies all deficiencies by his courage, and imposing upon the enemy with a confident front, marches boldly to battle.

In 1653, Marshal Turenne was surprized by the Prince of Condé, in a position in which his army was completely compromised. He had the power indeed, by an

immediate retreat, of covering himself by the Somme, which he possessed the means of crossing at Peronne, and from whence he was distant only half a league, but fearing the influence of this retrograde movement on the *morale* of his army, Turenne balanced all disadvantages by his courage, and marched boldly to meet the enemy with very inferior forces. After marching a league, he found an advantageous position where he made every disposition for a battle. It was three o'clock in the afternoon, but the Spaniards exhausted with fatigue, hesitated to attack him, and Turenne having covered himself with entrenchments during the night, the enemy no longer dared to risk a general action, and broke up his camp.

XIX.

Page 19. The transition from the *defensive* to the *offensive*, is one of the most delicate operations in war.

It is by studying the first campaign of Napoleon in Italy, that we learn what genius and boldness may effect in passing with an army from the *defensive* to the *offensive*. The army of the allies, commanded by general Beaulieu, was provided with every means that could render it formidable. Its force amounted to eighty thousand men, and two hundred pieces of cannon. The French army on the contrary could number scarcely thirty thousand men under arms, and thirty pieces of cannon. For some time there had been no issue of meat, and even the bread was irregularly supplied.

The infantry was ill clothed, the cavalry wretchedly mounted. All the draft horses had perished from want, so that the service of the artillery was performed by mules. To remedy these evils, large disbursements were necessary, and such was the state of the finances, that the government had only been able to furnish two thousand louis for the opening of the campaign. The French army could not possibly exist in this state. To advance or to retreat was absolutely necessary. Aware of the advantage of surprizing the enemy at the very outset of the campaign by some decisive blow, Napoleon prepared for it by re-casting the *morale* of his army.

In a proclamation full of energy, he reminded them that an ignoble death alone remained for them, if they continued on the

defensive ; that they had nothing to expect from France, but every thing to hope from victory. " Abundance courts you in the fertile plains of Italy, said he, are you deficient, soldiers, in constancy or in courage ?" Profiting by the moment of enthusiasm which he had inspired, Napoleon concentrated his forces in order to fall with his whole weight on the different corps of the enemy. Immediately afterwards the battles of Montenotte, Miliesimo, and Mondovi, added fresh confidence to the high opinion already entertained by the soldier for his chief, and that army which only a few days ago was encamped amid barren rocks, and consumed by famine, already aspired to the conquest of Italy. In one month after the opening of the campaign, Napoleon had terminated the war with the

king of Sardinia, and conquered the Milanese. Rich cantonments soon dispelled from the recollection of the French soldier, the misery and fatigue attendant upon this rapid march, while a vigilant administration of the resources of the country reorganized the *matériel* of the French army, and created the means necessary for the attainment of future success.

XX.

Page 20. It may be laid down as a principle, that the line of operation should not be abandoned. But it is one of the most skilful manœuvres in war to know how to change it, when circumstances authorize or render this necessary. . . .

Frederick sometimes changed his line of operation in the middle of a campaign ; but he was enabled to do this, because he was

manceuvring at that time in the centre of Germany, an abundant country, capable of supplying all the wants of his army in case his communications with Prussia were intercepted.

Marshal Turenne, in the campaign of 1746, gave up his line of communication to the allies in the same manner, but like Frederick, he was carrying on the war at this time in the centre of Germany, and having fallen with his whole forces upon Rain, he took the precaution of securing to himself a depôt upon which to establish his base of operation.

By a series of manœuvres, marked alike by audacity and genius, he subsequently compelled the imperial army to abandon its magazines, and retire into Austria for winter quarters.

But these are examples which it appears to me should only be imitated, when we have taken full measure of the capacity of our adversary, and above all, when we see no reason to apprehend an insurrection in the country, to which we transfer the theatre of war.

XXI.

Page 21. When an army carries with it a battering train, or large convoys of sick and wounded, it cannot march by too short a line upon its depôts.

It is above all in mountainous countries, and in those interspersed with woods and marshes, that it is of importance to observe this maxim ;—for the convoys and means of transport being frequently embarrassed in defiles, an enemy by manœuvring, may easily

disperse the escorts, or make even a successful attack upon the whole army, when it is obliged, from the nature of the country, to march in an extended column.

XXII.

Page 21. The art of encamping in a position, is the same as forming the line for battle in that position. To this end the artillery should be advantageously placed.

Frederick has remarked, that in order to be assured that your camp is well placed, you should see, if by making a small movement you can oblige the enemy to make a greater;—or if, after having forced him to retrograde one march, you can compel him to fall back another.

In defensive war, all camps should be

entrenched in the front and wings of the position they occupy, and care should be taken that the rear is left perfectly open. If you are threatened with being turned, arrangements should be made beforehand for taking up a more distant position, and you should profit by any disorder in the enemy's line of march, to make an attempt upon his artillery or baggage.

XXIII.

Page 21. When you are occupying a position which the enemy threatens to surround, collect all your strength immediately, and menace him with an offensive movement. :

This was the manœuvre practised by general Desaix, in 1798, near Radstadt. He

made up for inferiority in numbers by audacity, and maintained himself the whole day in position in spite of the vigorous attacks of the Archduke Charles. At night he effected his retreat in good order, and took up a position in the rear.

It was in accordance also with this principle, in the same campaign, that general Moreau gave battle at Biberach, to secure his retreat by the passes of the Black Mountains. A few days after, he fought at Schliengen with the same object. Placed in a good defensive position he menaced the Archduke Charles by a sudden return to the offensive, while his artillery and baggage were passing the Rhine by the bridge of Huningen, and he was making all the necessary dispositions for retiring behind that river himself.

Here, however, I would observe that the execution of such offensive demonstrations should be deferred always till towards the evening, in order that you may not be compromised by engaging too early in a combat which you cannot long maintain with success.

Night, and the uncertainty of the enemy after an affair of this kind, will always favor your retreat if it is judged necessary; but with a view to mask the operation more effectually, fires should be lighted all along the lines to deceive the enemy, and prevent him from discovering this retrograde movement, for in a retreat it is a great advantage to gain a march upon your adversary.

XXIV.

Page 22. Never lose sight of this maxim, that you should establish your cantonments at the most distant and best protected point from the enemy, especially when a surprise is possible.

In the campaign of 1645, Marshal Turenne lost the battle of Marienthal, by neglecting this principle, for if, instead of reassembling his divisions at Erbsthausen, he had rallied his troops at Mergentheim behind the Tauber, his army would have been much sooner re-united, and Count Merci in place of finding only three thousand men to fight at Erbsthausen, (of which he was well informed) would have had the whole French army to attack in a position covered by a river.

Some one having indiscreetly asked Viscount Turenne, how he had lost the battle of Marienthal. "By my own fault," replied the Marshal, "but," added he, "when a man has committed no faults in war, he can only have made it a short time."

XXV.

Page 22. When two armies are in order of battle, and the one has to retire over a bridge while the other has the circumference of the circle open, all the advantages are in favor of the latter. . . .

This was the position of the French army at the famous battle of Leipsig, which terminated the campaign of 1813 so fatally for Napoleon; for the battle of Hanau was of no consequence comparatively in the desperate situation of that army.

It strikes me, that in a situation like that of the French army previous to the battle of Leipsig, a general should never calculate upon any of those lucky chances which may arise out of a return to the offensive, but that he should rather adopt every possible means to secure his retreat—With this view he should immediately cover himself with good entrenchments, to enable him to repel with inferior numbers the attack of the enemy, while his own equipments are crossing the river. As fast as the troops reach the other side, they should occupy positions to protect the passage of the rear guard, and this last should be covered by a *Tete de pont* as soon as the army breaks up its camp. During the wars of the Revolution too little regard was paid to entrenchments, and it is for this reason, we have

seen large armies dispersed after a single reverse, and the fate of nations compromised by the issue of one battle.

XXVI.

Page 23. It is contrary to all principle to make corps which have no communication act separately, against a central force whose communications are open.

The Austrians lost the battle of Hohenlinden by neglecting this principle. The imperial army under the orders of the Archduke John was divided into four columns which had to march through an immense forest, previous to their junction in the plain of Anzing, where they intended to surprize the French. But these different corps having no direct communication, found them-

selves compelled to engage separately with an enemy who had taken the precaution of concentrating his masses, and who could move them with facility in a country with which he had been long previously acquainted.

Thus the Austrian army, enclosed in the defiles of the forest with its whole train of artillery and baggage, was attacked in its flanks and rear, and the Archduke John was only enabled to rally his dispersed and shattered divisions under cover of the night. The trophies obtained by the French army on this day were immense.

They consisted of eleven thousand prisoners, one hundred pieces of cannon, several stand of colours, and all the baggage of the enemy.

The battle of Hohenlinden decided the



fate of the campaign of 1800, and his brilliant and well-merited success placed Moreau in the rank of the first general of the age.

XXVII.

Page 23. When an army is driven from a position, the retreating columns should rally always sufficiently in the rear to prevent the enemy's interference with this object.


One great advantage which results from rallying your columns on a point far removed from the field of battle, or from the position previously occupied, is that the enemy is left in uncertainty of the direction you mean to take.

If he divides his force to pursue you he exposes himself to see his detachments

beaten in detail, especially if you have exerted all due diligence, and have effected the junction of your troops in sufficient time to get between his columns and disperse them one after the other.

It was by a manœuvre of this kind in the campaign of Italy in 1799, that General Melas gained the battle of Genola.

General Championet commanded the French army, and endeavoured to cut off the communication of the Austrians with Turin, by employing corps which manœuvred separately to get into their rear. Melas who divined his project, made a retrograde march, by which he persuaded his adversary he was in full retreat, although the real object of his movement was to concentrate his forces at the point fixed for the junction of the different detachments of the French



army, and which he beat and dispersed one after another by his great superiority in numbers. The result of this manœuvre in which the Austrian general displayed vigour, decision, and *coup d' œuil*, secured to him the peaceable possession of Piedmont.

It was also by the neglect of this principle that General Beaulieu, who commanded the Austro-Sardinian army in the campaign of 1796, lost the battle of Millesimo after that of Montenotte.

His object, in endeavouring to rally his different corps upon Millesimo, was to cover the high roads of Turin and Milan; but Napoleon, aware of the advantages arising from the ardour of troops emboldened by recent success, attacked him before he could assemble his divisions, and by a series of skilful manœuvres succeeded in se-

parating the combined armies. They retired in the greatest disorder—the one by the road of Milan, the other by that of Turin.

XXVIII.

Page 24. No force should be detached on the eve of a battle, because affairs may change during the night, either by the retreat of the enemy, or by the arrival of large reinforcements which might enable him to resume the offensive, and render your premature dispositions disastrous. . . .

In 1796 the army of the Sambre and the Meuse, commanded by General Jourdan, effected a retreat which was rendered still more difficult by the loss of his line of communication. Seeing, however, the forces of the Archduke Charles disseminated, Jourdan, in order to accomplish his retreat

upon Frankfort, resolved to open himself a way by Wurtzburg, where there were at that moment only two divisions of the Austrian army. This movement would have been attended with success, if the French general, believing he had simply these two divisions to contend with, had not committed the error of separating himself from the corps of Le Fevre, which he left at Schweinfurt to cover the only direct communication of the army with its base of operation.

The commission of this fault at the outset, added to some slowness in the march of the French general, secured the victory to the Archduke, who hastened to concentrate his forces.

The arrival of the two divisions also of Kray and Wartesleben during the battle, enabled him to oppose fifty thousand men

to the French army, which scarcely numbered thirty thousand combatants. This last was consequently beaten and obliged to continue its retreat by the mountains of Fuldes, where the badness of the roads could be equalled only by the difficulty of the country.

The division of Le Fevre amounting to fourteen thousand men, would, in all probability, have turned the scale in favor of Jourdan, had this last not unfortunately conceived that two divisions only were opposing his passage to Wurtzburg.

XXIX.


Page 24. When you have resolved to fight a battle, collect your whole strength. Dispense with nothing. A single battalion sometimes decides the day.

I think it here desirable to observe, that it is prudent before a battle to fix upon some point in rear of the reserve for the junction of the different detachments; for, if from unforeseen circumstances, these detachments should be prevented from joining before the action has commenced, they would be exposed, in case a retrograde movement should have been found necessary, to the masses of the enemy. It is desirable also to keep the enemy in ignorance of these reinforcements, in order to employ them with greater effect. A seasonable reinforcement, says Frederick, renders the success of a battle certain, because the enemy will always imagine it stronger than it is, and lose courage accordingly.

XXX.

Page 25. Nothing is so rash, and so contrary to principle, as to make a flank march before an army in position; especially when this army occupies heights at the foot of which you are forced to defile.

It was by a neglect of this principle that Frederick was beaten at Kollin in the first campaign of 1757. Notwithstanding prodigies of valour, the Prussians lost fifteen thousand men and a great portion of their artillery, while the loss of the Austrians did not exceed five thousand men. The consequence of this battle was more unfortunate still, since it obliged the king of Prussia to raise the siege of Pflague and to evacuate Bohemia.



It was also by making a flank march before the Prussian army, that the French lost the disgraceful battle of Rosbach.

This imprudent movement was still more to be reprehended, because the Prince de Soubise, who commanded the French army, had carried his indiscretion so far, as to manoeuvre, without either advanced guards or flanking corps in presence of the enemy. The result was, that his army, consisting of fifty thousand men, was beaten by six battalions and thirty squadrons. The French lost seven thousand men, twenty-seven standards, and a great number of cannon. The Prussians had only three hundred men, *hors de combat*.

Thus by having forgotten this principle, *that a flank march is never to be made before an enemy in line of battle*, Frederick lost his

army at Kollin; and Sonbise at Roebach, lost both his army and his honor.

XXXI.

Page 25. When you determine to fight a great battle, reserve to yourself every possible chance of success, more particularly if you have to deal with an adversary of superior talent; for if you are beaten even in the midst of your magazines and your communications. "Woe to the vanquished!"

We should make war, says Marshal Saxe, without leaving any thing to hazard, and in this especially consists the talent of a general. But when we have incurred the risk of a battle, we should know how to profit by the victory, and not merely content ourselves according to custom, with possession of the field.

It was by neglecting to follow up the first success, that the Austrian army after gaining the field of Marengo, saw itself compelled on the following day to evacuate the whole of Italy.


General Melas observing the French in retreat, left the direction of the movements of his army to the chief of his staff, and retired to Alexandria to repose from the fatigues of the day. Colonel Zach equally convinced with his general that the French army was completely broken, and consisted only of fugitives, formed the divisions in column of route.

By this arrangement the imperial army prepared to enter upon its victorious march in a formation not less than three miles in depth.

It was near four o'clock when general

Desaix rejoined the French army with his division. His presence restored in some degree an equality between the contending forces; and yet Napoleon hesitated for a moment whether to resume the offensive, or to make use of this corps to secure his retreat. The ardour of the troops to return to the charge decided his irresolution. He rode rapidly along the front of his divisions, and addressing the soldiers, "*We have retired far enough for to-day,*" said he, "*you know I always sleep upon the field of battle.*"

The army with unanimous shout, proclaimed to him a promise of victory. Napoleon resumed the offensive. The Austrian advanced guard panic struck at the sight of a formidable and unbroken body presenting itself suddenly at a point, where a few moments



before only fugitives were to be seen, went to the right about, and carried disorder into the mass of its columns. Attacked immediately afterwards with impetuosity in its front and flanks, the Austrian army was completely routed.

Marshal Daun experienced nearly the same fate as general Melas, at the battle of Torgau, in the campaign of 1760.

The position of the Austrian army was excellent. It had its left upon Torgau; its right on the plateau of Siptitz, and its front covered by a large sheet of water.

Frederick proposed to turn its right in order to make an attack upon the rear. For this purpose he divided his army into two corps, the one under the orders of Ziethen, with instructions to attack in front, following the edge of the water; the other under

his own immediate command, with which he set out to turn the right of the Austrians ; but Marshal Daun having had intimation of the movements of the enemy, changed his front by countermarching, and was thus enabled to repel the attacks of Frederick, whom he obliged to retreat. The two corps of the Prussian army had been acting without communication. Zeithen in the meantime, hearing the fire recede, concluded that the king had been beaten, and commenced a movement by his left in order to rejoin him ; but falling in with two battalions of the reserve, the Prussian general profited by this reinforcement to resume the offensive. Accordingly he renewed the attack with vigour, got possession of the plateau of Siptitz, and soon after of the whole field of battle. The

sun had already set when the king of Prussia received the news of this unexpected good fortune. He returned in all haste, took advantage of the night to restore order in his disorganized army, and the day after the battle, occupied Torgau.

Marshal Daun was receiving congratulations upon his victory, when he heard that the Prussians had resumed the offensive. He immediately commanded a retreat, and at day-break the Austrians repassed the Elbe with the loss of twelve thousand men, eight thousand prisoners, and forty-five pieces of cannon.

After the battle of Marengo, general Melas, although in the midst of his fortresses and magazines, saw himself compelled to abandon everything in order to save the wreck of his army.

General Mack capitulated after the battle of Ulm, although in the centre of his own country.

The Prussians, in spite of their dépôts and reserves, were obliged, after the battle of Jena, and the French after that of Waterloo, to lay down their arms.

Hence, we may conclude, that the misfortune that results from the loss of a battle, does not consist so much in the destruction of men and of *materiel* as in the discouragement which follows this disaster. The courage and confidence of the victors augment in proportion as those of the vanquished diminish; and whatever may be the resources of an army, it will be found that a retreat will degenerate rapidly into a route, unless the general in chief shall succeed, by combining boldness with skill, and

perseverance with firmness, in restoring the *morale* of his army.

XXXII.

Page 26. The duty of an advanced guard does not consist in advancing or retiring, but in manœuvring. An advanced guard should be composed of light cavalry, supported by a reserve of heavy, and by battalions of infantry, supported also by artillery.

It was the opinion of Frederick that an advanced guard should be composed of detachments of troops of all arms. The commander should possess skill in the choice of ground, and he should take care to be instantly informed by means of numerous patrols, of every thing passing in the enemy's camp.

In war, it is not the business of an advanced guard to fight, but to observe the enemy, in order to cover the movements of the army. When in pursuit, the advanced guard should charge with vigour, and cut off the baggage and insulated corps of the retreating enemy. For this purpose it should be reinforced with all the disposable light cavalry of the army.

XXXIII.

Page 27. It is contrary to all the usages of war, to allow parks or batteries of artillery to enter a defile unless you hold the other extremity. In case of retreat, the guns will embarrass your movements and be lost.

Nothing incumbers the march of an army so much as a quantity of baggage. In the campaign of 1796, Napoleon abandoned his

battering train under the walls of Mantua, after spiking the guns and destroying the carriages. By this sacrifice, he acquired a facility of manœuvring rapidly his little army, and obtained the initiative as well as a general superiority over the numerous but divided forces of Marshal Wurmser.

In 1799, during his retreat in Italy, general Moreau being compelled to manœuvre among the mountains, preferred separating himself entirely from his reserve artillery, which he directed upon France by the Col de Fenestrelle, rather than embarrass his march with this part of his equipment.

These are the examples we should follow, for if, by a rapidity of march, and a facility of concentration upon decisive points, the victory is gained, the *materiel* of an army is soon re-established. But if on the other

hand, we are beaten and compelled to retreat, it will be difficult to save our equipments, and we may have reason to congratulate ourselves, that we abandoned them in time to prevent them from augmenting the trophies of the enemy.

XXXIV.

Page 27. It should be laid down as a principle, never to leave intervals by which the enemy can penetrate between corps formed in order of battle, unless it be to draw him into a snare. . . .

In the campaign of 1757, the Prince of Lorraine, who was covering Prague with the Austrian army, perceived the Prussians threatening by a flank movement, to turn his right. He immediately ordered a partial change of front by throwing back the in-

fantry of that wing, so as to form a right angle with the rest of the line. But this manœuvre being executed in presence of the enemy, was not effected without some disorder. The heads of the columns having marched too quick, caused the rear to lengthen out, and when the line was formed to the right, a large interval appeared at the salient angle. Frederick observing this error hastened to take advantage of it. He directed his centre corps, commanded by the Duke of Bevern, to throw itself into this opening, and by this manœuvre decided the fate of the battle.


The Prince of Lorraine returned to Prague, beaten and pursued, with the loss of sixteen thousand men, and two hundred pieces of cannon.

It should be observed at the same time,

that this operation of throwing a corps into the intervals made by an army in line of battle, should never be attempted unless you are at least equal in force, and have an opportunity of outflanking the enemy on the one side or the other; for it is then only you can hope to divide his army in the centre, and insulate the wings entirely. If you are inferior in number, you run the risk of being stopped by the reserves, and overpowered by the enemy's wings, which may deploy upon your flanks and surround you.

It was by this manœuvre, that the Duke of Berwick gained the battle of Almanza, in the year 1707, in Spain.

The Anglo Portuguese army, under the command of Lord Galloway, came to invest Villena. Marshal Berwick, who commanded the French and Spanish army, quitted his



camp at Montalegre, and moved upon this town to raise the siege. At his approach, the English general, eager to fight a battle, advanced to meet him in the plains of Almanza. The issue was long doubtful. The first line commanded by the Duke of Popoli having been broken, the chevalier d'Asfeldt who had charge of the second, drew up his masses with large intervals between them, and when the English, who were in pursuit of the first line, reached these reserves, he took advantage of their disorder to attack them in flank, and defeated them entirely.

Marshal Berwick perceiving the success of this manœuvre, threw open his front, and deploying upon the enemy's flanks, while the reserve sustained the attack in front,


and the cavalry manœuvred in their rear, obtained a complete victory.

Lord Galloway wounded and pursued, collected with difficulty the remains of his army, and took shelter with them in Tortosa.

XXXV.

Page 28. Encampments of the same army should always be formed so as to protect each other.

At the battle of Dresden, in the campaign of 1813, the camp of the allies, although advantageously placed upon the heights on the left bank of the Elbe, was nevertheless extremely defective from being traversed longitudinally by a deep ravine which separated the left wing completely from the centre and the right. This vicious



formation did not escape the penetrating eye of Napoleon. He instantly carried the whole of his cavalry and two corps of infantry against the insulated wing, attacked it with superior numbers, overthrew it, and took ten thousand prisoners before it was possible to come to its support.

XXXVI.

Page 28. When the enemy's army is covered by a river, upon which he holds several *têtes de pont*, do not attack in front. This would divide your force, and expose you to be turned. . . .


If you occupy a town or village on the bank of a river, opposite to that held by the enemy, it is an advantage to make this spot the crossing point, because it is easier to cover your carriages and reserve artillery, as well as to mask the construction of your

bridge in a town, than in the open country. It is also a great advantage to pass a river opposite a village, when this last is only weakly occupied; because as soon as the advanced guard reaches the other side, it carries this post, makes a lodgment, and by throwing up a few defensive works, converts it easily into a *tête de pont*. By this means, the rest of the army is enabled to effect the passage with facility.

XXXVII.

Page 29. From the moment you are master of a position which commands the opposite bank, facilities are acquired for effecting the passage of the river; above all, if this position is sufficiently extensive to place upon it artillery in force. . . .

Frederick observes, that the passage of great rivers in the presence of the enemy is



one of the most delicate operations in war. Success on these occasions depends on secrecy, on the rapidity of the manœuvres, and the punctual execution of the orders given for the movements of each division. To pass such an obstacle in presence of an enemy, and without his knowledge, it is necessary not only that the previous dispositions should be well conceived, but that they should be executed without confusion.

When a river is less than sixty toises, (or 120 yards) in breadth, and you have a post upon the other side, the troops which are thrown across, derive such advantages from the protection of your artillery, that however small the angle may be, it is impossible for the enemy to prevent the establishment of a bridge.

In the campaign of 1705, Prince Eugene of Savoy, wishing to come to the assistance of the Prince of Piedmont, sought for a

favourable point at which to force the passage of the Adda, defended at that time by the French army under the command of the Duke de Vendome.

After having selected an advantageous situation, Prince Eugene erected a battery of twenty pieces of cannon, on a position which commanded the entire of the opposite bank, and covered his infantry by a line of entrenched parallels constructed on the slope of the declivity.

They were working vigorously at the bridge, when the Duke de Vendome appeared with his whole army. At first he seemed determined to oppose its construction, but after having examined the position of Prince Eugene, he judged this to be impracticable.

He therefore placed his army out of reach

of the prince's batteries, resting both his wings upon the river, so as to form a bow, of which the Adda was the chord. He then covered himself with entrenchments and abbatia, and was thus enabled to charge the enemy's columns whenever they debouched from the bridge, and to beat them in detail.

Eugene having reconnoitred the position of the French, considered the passage impossible. He therefore withdrew the bridge, and broke up his camp during the night.

It was by this manœuvre also that in the campaign of 1809, the Archduke Charles compelled the French to re-occupy the isle of Lobau, after having debouched on the left bank of the Danube. The march of the Archduke Charles was wholly concentric. He menaced Gros-asporn with

his right, Easing with his centre, and Enzersdorf with his left.

His army with both wings resting on the Danube, formed a semi-circle around Easing. Napoleon immediately attacked and broke the centre of the Austrians, but after having forced their first line, he found himself arrested by the reserves. In the mean time, the bridges upon the Danube had been destroyed, and several of his corps with their parks of artillery were still on the right bank. This disappointment, joined to the favourable position of the Austrians, decided Napoleon to re-enter the Isle of Lobau, where he had previously constructed a line of field works so as to give it all the advantages of a well entrenched camp.

XXXVIII.

Page 32. It is difficult to prevent an enemy supplied with pontons from crossing a river. When the object of an army which defends a river is to cover a siege, the moment the general has ascertained his inability to oppose the passage, he should take measures to arrive before the enemy at an intermediate position, between the river he defends, and the place he desires to cover.

Here we may observe, that this intermediate position should be reconnoitred, or rather, well entrenched beforehand ; for the enemy will be unable to make an offensive movement against the corps employed in the siege, until he has beaten the army of observation ; and this last under cover of its camp, may always await a favourable opportunity to attack him in flank or in rear.

Besides, the army which is once entrenched in this manner, has the advantage of being concentrated; while that of the enemy must act in detachments, if he wishes to cover his bridge, and watch the movements of the army of observation, so as to enable him to attack the besieging corps in its lines, without being exposed to an attempt on his rear, or being menaced with the loss of his bridge.

XXXIX.

Page 32. In the campaign of 1645, Turenne was attacked with his army before Philipsburg, by a very superior force. There was no bridge here over the Rhine, but he took advantage of the ground between the river and the place to establish his camp.

Marshal Saxe, in the campaign of 1741,

having passed the Moldau in quest of a detached corps of fourteen thousand men, which was about to throw itself into Prague, left a thousand infantry upon that river, with orders to entrench themselves upon a height directly opposite the *tête de pont*. By this precaution, the Marshal secured his retreat, and also the facility of repassing the bridge without disorder, by rallying his divisions between the entrenched height, and the *tête de pont*.


Were these examples unknown to the generals of modern times, or are they disposed to think such precautions superfluous?

XL.

Page 34. Fortresses are equally useful in offensive as defensive warfare. It is true, they will not in themselves arrest an army, but they are an excellent means of retarding, embarrassing, weakening, and annoying a victorious enemy.

The brilliant success of the allied armies in the campaign of 1814, has given to many military men a false idea of the real value of fortresses.

The formidable bodies which crossed the Rhine and the Alps at this period, were enabled to spare large detachments to blockade the strong places that covered the frontiers of France, without materially affecting the numerical superiority of the army which marched upon the capital. This



army was in a condition therefore to act, without the fear of being menaced in its line of retreat.

But at no period of military history were the armies of Europe so combined before, or governed so entirely by one common mind in the attainment of a single object. Under these circumstances, the line of fortresses which surround France, was rendered unavailable during the campaign ; but it would be very imprudent therefore to conclude, that a frontier guarded by numerous fortresses may be passed with impunity ; or that battles may be fought with these places in your rear, without previously besieging, or at least investing them, with sufficient forces.

XLI.

Page 34. There are only two ways of ensuring the success of a siege. The first—to begin by beating the enemy's army employed to cover the place, forcing it out of the field, and throwing its remains beyond some great natural obstacle, such as a chain of mountains or large river.

When we undertake a siege, says Montecuculli, we should not seek to place ourselves opposite the weakest part of the fortress, but at the point most favourable for establishing a camp and executing the designs we have in view. This maxim was well understood by the Duke of Berwick.

Sent to form the siege of Nice in 1706, he determined to attack on the side of Montalban, contrary to the advice of Van-

ban, and even to the orders of the king. Having a very small army at his disposal, he began by securing his camp. This he did, by constructing redoubts upon the heights that shut in the space between the Var and the Paillon, two rivers which supported his flanks. By this means he protected himself against a surprize; for the Duke of Savoy having the power of debouching suddenly by the Col de Tende, it was necessary that the Marshal should be enabled to assemble his forces, so as to move rapidly upon his adversary, and fight him before he got into position, otherwise his inferiority in numbers would have obliged him to raise the siege.

When Marshal Saxe was besieging Brussels with only twenty-eight thousand men opposed to a garrison of twelve thousand,

he received intelligence that the prince of Waldeck was assembling his forces to raise the siege. Not being strong enough to form an army of observation, the marshal reconnoitred a field of battle on the little river Voluve, and made all the necessary dispositions for moving rapidly to the spot in case of the approach of the enemy. By this means he was prepared to receive his adversary without discontinuing the operations of the siege.

XLII.

Page 37. Fenquière says that we should never wait for the enemy in the lines of circumvallation, but that we should go out and attack him. He is in error.

During the siege of Mons in 1691, the prince of Orange assembled his army, and

advanced as far as Notre Dame de Halle, making a demonstration to succour the place. Louis XIV. who commanded the siege in person, called a council of war to deliberate on what was to be done in case the prince of Orange approached. The opinion of marshal Luxembourg was to remain within the lines of circumvallation, and that opinion prevailed.

The marshal laid it down as a principle, that when the besieging army is not strong enough to defend the whole extent of circumvallation, it should quit the lines and advance to meet the enemy, but when it is strong enough to encamp in two lines around a place, that it is better to profit by a good entrenchment, more especially as by this means the siege is not interrupted.

In 1658 marshal Turenne was besieging

Dunkirk. He had already opened the trenches when the Spanish army, under the orders of the prince Don Juan, Condé, and d'Hocquincourt appeared in sight, and took post upon the Downs at the distance of a league from his lines. Turenne had the superiority in numbers, and he determined to quit his entrenchments. He had other advantages also. The enemy was without artillery, and their superiority in cavalry was rendered useless by the unfavourable nature of the ground. It was therefore of great importance to beat the Spanish army before it had time to entrench itself and bring up its artillery. The victory gained by the French on this occasion, justified all the combinations of marshal Turenne.

When marshal Berwick was laying siege to Philipsburgh in 1733, he had reason to

apprehend that the prince of Savoy would attack him with all the forces of the empire before its termination. The marshal therefore, after having made his disposition of the troops intended for the siege, formed with the rest of his army a corps of observation to make head against prince Eugene, in case the latter should choose to attack him in his lines, or attempt a diversion on the Moselle or Upper Rhine. Prince Eugene having arrived in front of the besieging army, some general officers were of opinion, that it was better not to await the enemy within the lines, but to move forward and attack him. But marshal Berwick who agreed with the duke of Luxembourg, that an army which can occupy completely good entrenchments is not liable to be forced, persisted in remaining within his works.

The result proved that this was also the opinion of prince Eugene, for he did not dare to attack the entrenchments, which he would not have failed to do, if he had had any hopes of success.

XLIII.

Page 38. Those who proscribe lines of circumvallation, and all the assistance which the science of the engineer can afford, deprive themselves gratuitously of an auxiliary, which is never injurious, almost always useful, and often indispensable. . .

If we are inferior in numbers, says marshal Saxe, intrenchments are of no use, for the enemy will bring all his forces to bear upon particular points. If we are of equal strength, they are unnecessary also. If we are superior, we do not want them. Then

why give ourselves the trouble to entrench? Notwithstanding this opinion of the inutility of entrenchments, marshal Saxe had often recourse to them.

In 1797 generals Provera and Hohenzollern having presented themselves before Mantua (where marshal Wurmser was shut up) for the purpose of raising the siege, they were stopped by the lines of contravallation of St. George. This slight obstacle sufficed to afford Napoleon time to arrive from Rivoli, and defeat their enterprise. It was in consequence of neglecting to entrench themselves that the French had been obliged to raise the siege in the preceding campaign.

XLIV.

Page 39. If circumstances prevent a sufficient garrison being left to defend a fortified town which contains an hospital and magazines, at least every means should be employed to secure the citadel against a *coup de main*.

A few battalions dispersed about a town inspire no terror; but shut up in the more narrow outline of a citadel, they assume an imposing attitude. For this reason it appears to me, that such a precaution is always necessary, not only in fortresses, but wherever there are hospitals or depôts of any kind. Where there is no citadel, some quarter of the town should be fixed upon most favourable for defence, and entrenched in such a manner as to oppose the greatest resistance possible.

XLV.

Page 39. A fortified place can only protect the garrison and arrest the enemy for a certain time. When this time has elapsed, and the defences are destroyed, the garrison should lay down its arms. All civilized nations are agreed on this point; and there has never been an argument except with reference to the greater or less degree of defence, which the governor is bound to make before he capitulates.

In 1705, the French who were besieged in Haguenau, by Count Thungen, found themselves incapable of sustaining an assault. Péri the governor, who had already distinguished himself by a vigorous defence, despairing of being allowed to capitulate on any terms short of becoming prisoner of war, resolved to abandon the place, and cut his way through the besiegers.

In order to conceal his intention more effectually, and while he deceived the enemy to sound at the same time the disposition of his officers, he assembled a council of war, and declared his resolution to die in the breach. Then, under pretext of the extremity to which he was reduced, he commanded the whole garrison under arms, and leaving only a few sharp shooters in the breach, gave the order to march, and set out in silence under cover of the night, from Haguenaau. This audacious enterprise was crowned with success, and Péri reached Saverne without having suffered the smallest loss.

Two fine instances of defence in later times are those of Massena at Genoa, and of Palafox at Saragossa.

The first marched out with arms and



baggage, and all the honors of war, after rejecting every summons, and defending himself until hunger alone compelled him to capitulate. The second only yielded, after having buried his garrison amid the ruins of the city, which he defended from house to house, until famine and death left him no alternative but to surrender.—This siege, which was equally honorable to the French as to the Spaniards, is one of the most memorable in the history of war.—In the course of it Palafox displayed every possible resource which courage and obstinacy can supply in the defence of a fortress.

All real strength is founded in the mind; and on this account I am of opinion that we should be directed in the choice of a governor, less by his genius, than his personal character. His most essential quali-

ties should be courage, perseverance, and soldierlike devotedness. Above all, he should possess the talent, not only of infusing courage into the garrison, but of kindling a spirit of resistance in the whole population. Where this last is wanting, however art may multiply the defences of a place, the garrison will be compelled to capitulate, after having sustained the first, or at most, the second assault.

XLVI.

Page 41. The keys of a fortress are always well worth the retirement of the garrison, when it is resolved to yield only on those conditions. On this principle it is always wiser to grant an honorable capitulation to a garrison, which has made a vigorous resistance, than to risk an assault.

Marshal Villars has justly observed, that

no governor of a place should be permitted to excuse himself for surrendering, on the ground of wishing to preserve the king's troops. Every garrison that displays courage will escape being prisoners of war. For there is no general who, however well assured of carrying a place by assault, will not prefer granting terms of capitulation, rather than risk the loss of a thousand men in forcing determined troops to surrender.

XLVII.

Page 41. Infantry, cavalry, and artillery, are nothing without each other. They should always be so disposed in cantonments, as to assist each other in case of surprise.

A general, says Frederick, should direct his whole attention to the tranquillity of his cantonments, in order that the soldier

may be relieved from all anxiety, and repose in security from his fatigues. With this view, care should be taken that the troops are able to form rapidly upon ground which has been previously reconnoitred; that the generals remain always with their divisions or brigades, and that the service is carried on throughout with exactness.

Marshal Saxe is of opinion, that an army should not be in a hurry to quit its cantonments, but that it should wait till the enemy has exhausted himself with marching, and be ready to fall upon him with fresh troops when he is overcome with fatigue.

I believe, however, that it would be dangerous to trust implicitly to this high authority, for there are many occasions where all the advantage lies in the initiative, more especially when the enemy has been com-

elled to extend his cantonments from scarcity of subsistence, and can be attacked before he has time to concentrate his forces.

XLVIII.

Page 42. The formation of infantry in line should be always in two ranks, because the length of the musket only admits of an effective fire in this formation. The discharge of the third rank is not only uncertain, but frequently dangerous to the ranks in its front.

I am of opinion, if circumstances require a line of infantry to resort to a square, that two deep is too light a formation to resist the shock of cavalry. However useless the third rank may appear for the purposes of file firing, it is notwithstanding necessary, in order to replace the men who fall in the ranks in front;—otherwise you

would be obliged to close in the files, and by this means leave intervals between the companies which the cavalry would not fail to penetrate. It appears to me also, that when infantry is formed in two ranks, the columns will be found to open out in marching to a flank. If it should be considered advantageous behind entrenchments, to keep the infantry in two ranks, the third rank should be placed in reserve, and brought forward to relieve the front rank when fatigued, or when the fire is observed to slacken. I am induced to make these remarks, because I have seen an excellent pamphlet which proposes the two deep formation for infantry as the best. The author supports his opinion by a variety of plausible reasons, but not sufficient, as it appears to me, to answer all

the objections that may be offered to this practice.

XLIX.

Page 42. The habit of mixing small bodies of infantry and cavalry together, is a bad one, and attended with many inconveniencies. The cavalry loses its power of action. It becomes fettered in all its movements. Its energy is paralysed. . .

This also was the opinion of Marshal Saxe. The weakness of the above formation, says he, is sufficient in itself to intimidate the platoons of infantry, because they must be lost if the cavalry is beaten.

The cavalry also which depends on the infantry for succour, is disconcerted the moment a brisk forward movement carries them out of sight of their supports. Mar-

shal Turenne, and the generals of his time, sometimes employed this order of formation; but that does not, in my opinion, justify a modern author for recommending it in an Essay, entitled, "*Considerations Sur l'art de la Guerre.*" In fact this formation has long been abandoned, and since the introduction of light artillery it appears to me almost ridiculous to propose it.

L.

Page 43. Charges of cavalry are equally useful at the beginning, the middle, and the end of a battle. They should be made always if possible, on the flanks of the infantry, especially when this last is engaged in front.

The Archduke Charles in speaking of cavalry recommends that it should be brought

in mass upon a decisive point, when the moment for employing it arrives ; that is to say, when it can attack with a certainty of success. As the rapidity of its movement enables cavalry to act along the whole line in the same day, the general who commands it, should keep it together as much as possible, and avoid dividing it into many detachments. When the nature of the ground admits of cavalry being employed on all points of the line, it is desirable to form it in column behind the infantry, and in a position from whence it may be easily directed wherever it is required. If cavalry is intended to cover a position, it should be placed sufficiently in the rear to meet at full speed, any advance of troops coming to attack that position. If it is destined to cover the flank of the infantry, it should for

the same reason be placed directly behind it. As the object of cavalry is purely offensive, it should be a rule, to form it at such a distance only from the point of collision, as to enable it to acquire its utmost impulse, and arrive at the top of its speed into action. With respect to the cavalry reserve, this should only be employed at the end of a battle, either to render the success more decisive, or to cover the retreat. Napoleon remarks that at the battle of Waterloo, the cavalry of the guard which composed the reserve, was engaged against his orders. He complains of having been deprived from five o'clock of the use of this reserve, which when well employed, had so often ensured him the victory.



L.I.

Page 44. It is the business of the cavalry to follow up the victory, and to prevent the enemy from rallying.

Victor or vanquished, it is of the greatest importance to have a body of cavalry in reserve, either to take advantage of victory, or to secure a retreat. The most decisive battles lose half their value to the conqueror, when the want of cavalry prevents him from following up his success, and depriving the enemy of the power of rallying.


When a retiring army is pursued, it is more especially upon the flanks that the weight of cavalry should fall, if you are strong enough in that arm to cut off his retreat.

LII.

Page 44. Artillery is more essential to cavalry than to infantry, because cavalry has no fire for its defence, but depends on the sabre.

Horse artillery is an invention of Frederick. Austria lost no time in introducing it into her armies, although in an imperfect degree. It was only in 1792, that this arm was adopted in France, where it was brought rapidly to its present perfection.

The services of this arm during the wars of the Revolution were immense. It may be said to have changed to a certain extent the character of tactics, because its facility of movement enables it to bear with rapidity on every point where artillery can be employed with success. Napoleon has



remarked in his memoirs that a flanking battery which strikes and rakes the enemy obliquely, is capable of deciding a victory in itself. To this we may add, that independent of the advantages which cavalry derives from horse artillery in securing its flanks, and in opening the way for a successful charge by the destructiveness of its fire, it is desirable that these two arms should never be separated, but ready at all times to seize upon points where it may be necessary to employ cannon. On these occasions the cavalry masks the march of the artillery, protects its establishment in position, and covers it from the attack of the enemy, until it is ready to open its fire.

LIII.

Page 45. In march or in position, the greater part of the artillery should be with the divisions of infantry and cavalry. The rest should be in reserve.

The better infantry is, the more important it is to support it by artillery, with a view to its preservation.

It is essential also, that the batteries attached to divisions should march in the front, because this has a strong influence on the morale of the soldier. He attacks always with confidence when he sees the flanks of the column well covered with cannon.

The artillery reserve should be kept for a decisive moment, and then employed in

full force, for it will be difficult for the enemy at such a time to presume to attack it.

There is scarcely an instance of a battery of sixty pieces of cannon having been carried by a charge of infantry or cavalry, unless where it was entirely without support, or in a position to be easily turned.

LIV.

Page 45. Artillery should always be placed in the most advantageous positions, and as far in front of the line of cavalry and infantry, without compromising the safety of the guns, as possible. . . .

The battery of eighteen pieces of cannon, which covered the centre of the Russian army at the battle of La Moskwa, (Borodino) may be cited as an example.

Its position upon a circular height which

commanded the field in every direction, added so powerfully to its effect, that its fire alone sufficed, for a considerable time, to paralyze the vigorous attack made by the French with their right. Although twice broken, the left of the Russian army closed to this battery, as to a pivot, and twice recovered its former position. After repeated attacks conducted with a rare intrepidity, the battery was at length carried by the French, but not till they had lost the *élite* of their army, and with it, the generals Canlincourt and Montbrun. Its capture decided the retreat of the Russian left.

I might advert likewise to another instance in the campaign of 1809, and to the terrible effect produced by the hundred pieces of cannon of the guard which general Lau-

riston directed, at the battle of Wagram, against the right of the Austrian army.

LV.


Page 56. A general should never put his army into cantonments, when he has the means of collecting supplies of forage and provisions, and of thus providing for the wants of the soldier in the open field.

One great advantage which results from having an army in camp is, that it is easier to direct its spirit and maintain its discipline there. The soldier in cantonments abandons himself to repose. He ends by finding a pleasure in idleness, and in fearing to return to the field. The reverse takes place in a camp. There, a feeling of ennui and a severer discipline make him anxious for the opening of the campaign, to interrupt the monotony

of service and relieve it with the chances and variety of war. Besides an army in camp is much more secure from a surprize than in cantonments, the defect of which usually consists in their occupying too great an extent of ground. When an army is obliged to go into quarters, the Marquis de Fenquière recommends a camp to be selected in front of the line where the troops can be frequently assembled—sometimes suddenly, in order to exercise their vigilance, or for the sole purpose of bringing the different corps together.

LVI.

Page 46. A good general, a well organized system, good instruction and severe discipline, aided by effective establishments, will always make fine troops, independently of the cause for which they fight.



This remark appears to me less applicable to officers than to soldiers, for as war is not a state of things natural to man, it follows that those who maintain its cause, must be governed by some strong excitement. Much enthusiasm and devotedness are required on the part of the troops for the general who commands, to induce an army to perform great actions in a war in which it takes no interest. This is sufficiently proved by the apathy of auxiliaries, unless when inspired by the conduct of their chief.

LVII.

Page 47. When a nation is without establishments, and a military system, it is very difficult to organize an army.

This is an unanswerable truth, more particularly with reference to an army intended

to act upon the system of modern war, and in which, order, precision, and rapidity of movement are the principal essentials to success.

LVIII.

Page 47. The first qualification of a soldier is fortitude under fatigue and privation. Courage is only the second. Hardship, poverty, and want, are, the best school for a soldier.

Valour belongs to the young soldier, as well as to the veteran; but in the former it is more evanescent. It is only by habits of service, and after several campaigns, that the soldier acquires that moral courage, which makes him support the fatigues and privations of war without a murmur. Experience by this time has instructed him to supply his own wants. He is satisfied with

what he can procure, because he knows that success is only to be obtained by fortitude and perseverance. Well might Napoleon say, that misery and want were the best school for a soldier; for as nothing could be compared with the total destitution of the army of the Alps, when he assumed the command, so nothing could equal the brilliant success which he obtained with this army in his first campaign in Italy. The conquerors of Montenotte, Lodi, Castiglione, Bassano, Arcole, and Rivoli had beheld, only a few months before, whole battalions covered with rags, and deserting for the want of subsistence.

LIX.

Page 48. There are five things which the soldier should never be without. His firelock, his ammunition, his knapsack, his provisions, (for at least four days) and his entrenching tool.

It is fortunate that Napoleon has recognized the advantage of giving to every soldier an entrenching tool. His authority is the best answer to the ridicule which has been thrown upon those who proposed it. An axe will be found to inconvenience the foot soldier as little as the sword he wears at his side, and it will be infinitely more useful. When axes are given out to companies, or are carried by fatigue men during a campaign, they are soon lost; and it often happens when a camp is to be formed, that

a difficulty arises in cutting wood, and building huts for the soldier ; whereas by making the axe a part of every man's appointments, he is obliged to have it always with him ; and whether the object be to entrench himself in a village, or to erect huts in a camp, the commander of a corps will speedily see the advantage of this innovation.

When once the axe has been generally adopted, we shall, perhaps, see the desirability of issuing pickaxes and shovels to particular companies, and also the benefit of more frequent entrenchments. It is more particularly during retreats that it is important to entrench when the army has reached a good position ; for an entrenched camp not only furnishes the means of rallying troops which are pursued ; but if it be fortified in such a manner as to render the issue

of an attack doubtful to the enemy, it will not only sustain the morale of the soldier in the retreat, but afford the general in chief opportunities for resuming the offensive, and profiting by the first false movement on the part of his adversary. It will be recollected how Frederick, in the campaign of 1761, when surrounded by two Russian and Austrian armies, whose united force was quadruple his own, saved his army by entrenching himself in the camp of Buntz-alvitz.

LX.

Page 48. Every means should be taken to attach the soldier to his colours. This is best accomplished, by showing consideration and respect to the old soldier.

Some modern writers have recommended

on the other hand to limit the period of service, in order to bring the whole youth of a country successively under arms. By this means they purpose to have the levies *en masse* all ready trained and capable of resisting successfully a war of invasion. But however advantageous at first sight such a military system may appear, I believe it will be found to have many objections.

In the first place, the soldier fatigued with the minutiae of discipline in a garrison, will not feel much inclined to re-enlist after he has received his discharge, more especially since having served the prescribed time, he will consider himself to have fulfilled all the duties of a citizen to his country. Returning to his friends, he will probably marry, or establish himself in a trade. From that moment his military spirit declines, and

he soon becomes ill adapted to the business of war. On the contrary, the soldier who serves long, becomes attached to his regiment as to a new family. He submits to the yoke of discipline, accustoms himself to the privations his situation imposes, and ends by finding his condition agreeable. There are few officers that have seen service, who have not discovered the difference between old and young soldiers, with reference to their power of supporting the fatigues of a long campaign, to the determined courage that characterizes their attack, or to the ease with which they rally after being broken.

Montecuculli observes, that it takes time to discipline an army, more to inure it to war, and still more, to constitute veterans. For this reason, he recommends that great consideration should be shown to the old

soldiers, that they should be carefully provided for, and a large body of them kept always on foot. It seems to me also, that it is not enough to increase the pay of the soldier according to his period of service, but that it is highly essential to confer on him some mark of distinction that shall secure to him privileges calculated to encourage him to grow grey under arms, and above all to do so with honor.

LXI.

Page 49. It is not studied speeches at the moment of battle that render soldiers brave. The veteran scarcely listens to them, and the recruit forgets them at the first discharge. . . .

The opinion of the general in chief energetically expressed is, notwithstanding,

productive of great effect on the *morale* of the soldier.

In 1703 at the attack of Hornbec, Marshal Villars, seeing the troops advancing without spirit, threw himself at their head, "what," said he, "is it expected that I, a "marshal of France, should be the first to escalade, when I order you to attack?"

These few words rekindled their ardour, officers and soldiers rushed upon the works, and the town was taken almost without loss.

"We have retired far enough for to-day ; "you know I always sleep upon the field of battle !" said Napoleon, as he flew through the ranks at the moment of resuming the offensive at Marengo. These few words sufficed to revive the courage of the soldiers, and to make them forget the fatigues of the

day, during which, almost every man had been engaged.

LXII.

Page 50. Tents are unfavorable to health. The soldier is best when he bivouacques, because he sleeps with his feet to the fire, which speedily dries the ground on which he lies. A few planks or a morsel of straw shelter him from the wind.

The acknowledged advantage of bivouacquiring is another reason for adding an entrenching tool to the equipment of the soldier ; for with the assistance of the axe and shovel he can hut himself without difficulty. I have seen huts erected with the branches of trees covered with turf, where the soldier was perfectly sheltered from the cold and wet, even in the worst season.

LXIII.

Page 51. All information obtained from prisoners should be received with caution, and estimated at its real value. A soldier seldom sees anything beyond his company; and an officer can afford intelligence of little more than the position and movements of the division to which his regiment belongs.

Montecuculli wisely observes, that prisoners should be interrogated separately, in order to ascertain by the agreement in their answers, how far they may be endeavouring to mislead you. Generally speaking, the information required from officers who are prisoners, should have reference to the strength and resources of the enemy, and sometimes to his localities and position. Frederick recommends that prisoners should

be menaced with instant death, if they are found attempting to deceive by false reports.

LXIV.

Page 52. Nothing is so important in war as an undivided command. For this reason, when war is carried on against a single power, there should be only one army, acting upon one base, and conducted by one chief.

Success, says the Archduke Charles, is only to be obtained by simultaneous efforts, directed upon a given point, sustained with constancy, and executed with decision. It rarely happens that any number of men who desire the same object, are perfectly agreed as to the means of attaining it; and if the will of one individual is not allowed to pre-

dominate, there can be no *ensemble* in the execution of their operations ; neither will they attain the end proposed. It is useless to confirm this maxim by examples. History abounds in them.

Prince Eugene and Marlborough would never have been so successful in the campaigns which they directed in concert, if a spirit of intrigue and difference of opinion had not constantly disorganized the armies opposed to them.

LXV.

Page 52. The same consequences which have uniformly attended long discussions and councils of war, will result at all times. They will terminate in the adoption of the worst course, which, in war, is always the most timid ; or if you will, the most prudent. The only true wisdom in a general is determined courage.

Prince Eugene used to say that councils of war are only useful when you want an excuse for attempting *nothing*. This was also the opinion of Villars. A general in chief should avoid, therefore, assembling a council on occasions of difficulty, and should confine himself to consulting separately his most experienced generals in order to benefit by their advice, while he is governed at the same time in his decision by his own judgment. By this means, he becomes responsible, it is true, for the measures he pursues; but he has the advantage also of acting upon his own conviction, and of being certain, that the secret of his operations will not be divulged, as is usually the case where it is discussed by a council of war.

LXVI.

Page 53. In war the general alone can judge of certain arrangements. It is he alone who can conquer difficulties by his own superior sagacity and courage.

The officer who obeys, whatever may be the nature or extent of his command, will always stand excused for executing implicitly the orders which have been given to him. This is not the case with the general in chief, on whom the safety of the army, and the success of the campaign depend.—Occupied without intermission in the whole process of observation and reflection, it is easy to conceive, that he will acquire by degrees a solidity of judgment, which will enable him to see things in a clearer and more en-

larged point of view than his inferior generals.


Marshal Villars, in his campaigns, acted almost always in opposition to the advice of his generals, and he was almost always fortunate. So true it is, that a general, who feels confident in his talent for command, must follow the dictates of his own genius if he wishes to achieve success.

LXVII.

Page 53. To authorize a general or other officers to lay down their arms in virtue of a particular capitulation, under any other circumstances than when they are composing the garrison of a fortress, affords a dangerous latitude. It is destructive of all military character in a nation to open such a door to the cowardly, the weak, or even to the misdirected brave. . . .

In the campaign of 1759, Frederick directed general Fink with eighteen thousand men upon Maxen, for the purpose of cutting off the Austrian army from the defiles of Bohemia. Surrounded by twice his numbers, Fink capitulated after a sharp action, and fourteen thousand men laid down their arms. This conduct was the more disgraceful, because general Winch, who commanded the cavalry, cut his way through the enemy. The whole blame of the surrender fell, therefore, upon Fink, who was tried afterwards by a court marshal and sentenced to be cashiered and imprisoned for two years.

In the campaign of Italy in 1796, the Austrian General Provéra capitulated with two thousand men in the castle of Cossaria. Subsequently at the battle of La Favorite,



the same general capitulated with a corps of six thousand men. I scarcely dare to revert to the shameful defection of general Mack in the capitulation at Ulm in 1805, where thirty thousand Austrians laid down their arms; when we have seen during the wars of the Revolution, so many generals open themselves a way by a vigorous effort through the enemy, supported only by a few battalions.

LXVIII.


Page 54. There is no security for any sovereign, for any people, or for any general, if officers are permitted to capitulate in the open field, and to lay down their arms, in virtue of conditions favorable to the contracting party, but contrary to the interests of the army at large.

Soldiers who are almost always ignorant of the designs of their chief, cannot be

responsible for his conduct. If he orders them to lay down their arms, they must do so; otherwise they fail in that law of discipline which is more essential to an army than thousands of men. It appears to me therefore, under these circumstances, that the chiefs alone are responsible, and liable to the punishment due to their cowardice. We have no example of soldiers being wanting in their duty in the most desperate situations, where they are commanded by officers of approved resolution.


LXIX.

Page 55. There is but one honorable mode of becoming prisoner of war. That is, by being taken separately, by which is meant, by being cut off entirely, and when we can no longer make use of our arms. In this case, there can be no conditions, for honor can impose none. We yield to an irresistible necessity.



There is always time enough to surrender prisoner of war. This should be deferred therefore till the last extremity. And here I may be permitted to cite an example of rare obstinacy in defence, which has been related to me by ocular witnesses. The captain of grenadiers Dubrenil of the 37th Regiment of the line, having been sent on detachment with his company, was stopped on the march by a large party of cossacks who surrounded him on every side. Dubrenil formed his little force into square, and endeavoured to gain the skirts of a wood, (within a few muskets' shot of the spot where he had been attacked,) and reached it with very little loss. But as soon as the grenadiers saw this refuge secured to them, they broke and fled, leaving their captain and a few brave men, who

were resolved not to abandon him, at the mercy of the enemy. In the mean time, the fugitives who had rallied in the depth of the wood, ashamed of having forsaken their leader, came to the resolution of rescuing him from the enemy, if a prisoner, or of carrying off his body if he had fallen. With this view they formed once more upon the out-skirts, and opening a passage with their bayonets through the cavalry, penetrated to their captain, who notwithstanding seventeen wounds, was defending himself still. They immediately surrounded him, and regained the wood with little loss. Such examples are not rare in the wars of the revolution, and it were desirable to see them collected by some contemporary, that soldiers might learn how much is to be achieved in war



by determined energy and sustained resolution.


LXX.

Page 56. The conduct of a general in a conquered country is full of difficulties. If severe, he irritates and increases the number of his enemies. If lenient he gives birth to expectations which only render the abuses and vexations inseparable from war, more conspicuous.

Among the Romans, generals were only permitted to arrive at the command of armies, after having exercised the different functions of the magistracy. / Thus by a previous knowledge of administration, they were prepared to govern the conquered provinces with all that discretion, which a newly acquired power supported by arbitrary force, demands.

In the military institutions of modern times, the generals, instructed only in what concerns the operations of strategy and tactics, are obliged to entrust the civil departments of the war to inferior agents, who without belonging to the army, render all those abuses, and vexations, inseparable from its operations still more intolerable.

This observation which I do little more than repeat, seems to me notwithstanding, deserving of particular attention; for if the leisure of general officers was directed in time of peace to the study of diplomacy; if they were employed in the different embassies which sovereigns send to foreign courts, they would acquire a knowledge of the laws and of the government of those countries, in which they may be called hereafter to carry on the war. . They would



learn also to distinguish those points of interest on which all treaties must be based, which have for their object the advantageous termination of a campaign. By the aid of this information, they would obtain certain and positive results, since all the springs of action as well as the machinery of war would be in their hands. We have seen Prince Eugene, and Marshal Villars, each fulfilling with equal ability the duties of a general and a negociator.

When an army which occupies a conquered province observes strict discipline there are few examples of insurrection among the people, unless indeed resistance is provoked (as but too often happens,) by the exactions of inferior agents employed in the civil administration.

It is to this point therefore that the gene-

ral in chief should principally direct his attention, in order that the contributions imposed by the wants of the army, may be levied with impartiality, and above all, that they may be applied to their true object instead of serving to enrich the collectors, as is ordinarily the case.

LXXI.

Page 56. Nothing can excuse a general who profits by the knowledge acquired in the service of his country, to deliver up her frontier and her towns to foreigners. This is a crime reprobated by every principle of religion, morality, and honor.

Ambitious men, who, listening only to their passions, arm natives of the same land against each other, (under the deceitful pretext of the public good,) are still more criminal. For however arbitrary a govern-

ment, the institutions which have been consolidated by time, are always preferable to civil war, and to that anarchy which this last is obliged to create for the justification of its crimes.

To be faithful to his sovereign, and to respect the established government, are the first principles which ought to distinguish a soldier and a man of honor.


LXXII.

Page 57. A general in chief, has no right to shelter his mistakes in war under cover of his sovereign, or of a minister, when these are both distant from the scene of operation, and must be consequently either ill-informed or wholly ignorant of the actual state of things.

In the campaign of 1697, Prince Eugene caused the courier to be intercepted, who

was bringing him orders from the emperor forbidding him to hazard a battle, for which every thing had been prepared, and which he foresaw would prove decisive. He considered therefore that he did his duty in evading the orders of his sovereign; and the victory of Zanta, in which the Turks lost about thirty thousand men, and four thousand prisoners, rewarded his audacity. In the mean time, notwithstanding the immense advantages which accrued from this victory to the imperial arms, Eugene was disgraced on his arrival at Vienna.

In 1793, General Hoche having received orders to move upon Treves with an army harrassed by constant marches in a mountainous and difficult country, refused to obey. He observed with reason, that in order to obtain possession of an unimportant



fortress, they were exposing his army to inevitable ruin. He caused therefore his troops to return into winter quarters, and preferred the preservation of his army, upon which the success of the future campaign depended, to his own safety. Recalled to Paris, he was thrown into a dungeon, which he only quitted on the downfall of Robespierre.

I dare not decide if such examples are to be imitated ; but it seems to me highly desirable, that a question so new and so important, should be discussed by men who are capable of determining its merits.

LXXIII.

Page 59. The first qualification in a general in chief, is a cool head ; that is, a head which receives just impressions, and estimates things and objects at their real value. He must not allow himself to be elated by good news, or depressed by bad. The impressions he receives, either successively or simultaneously in the course of the day, should be so classed, as to take up only the exact place in his mind which they deserve to occupy.

The first quality in a general in chief, says Montecuculli, is a great knowledge of the art of war. This is not intuitive, but the result of experience. A man is not born a commander. He must become one. Not to be anxious ; to be always cool ; to avoid confusion in his commands ; never to change countenance ; to give his orders in

the midst of battle with as much composure, as if he were perfectly at ease. These are the proofs of valour in a general.

To encourage the timid ; to increase the number of the truly brave ; to revive the drooping ardour of the troops in battle ; to rally those who are broken ; to bring back to the charge those who are repulsed ; to find resources in difficulty and success even amid disaster ; to be ready at a moment to devote himself if necessary for the welfare of the state. These are the actions which acquire for a General distinction and renown.

To this enumeration may be added, the talent of discriminating character, and of employing every man in the particular post which nature has qualified him to fill. My principal attention, said Marshal Villars, " was always directed to the study of the


younger generals. Such a one I found by the boldness of his character, fit to lead a column of attack. Another, from a disposition naturally cautious but without being deficient in courage, more perfectly to be relied on for the defence of a country." It is only by a just application of these personal qualities to their respective objects, that it is possible to command success in war.

LXXIV.

Page 60. To know the country thoroughly; to be able to conduct a reconnoissance with skill; to superintend the transmission of orders promptly; to lay down the most complicated movements of an army intelligibly, but in a few words and with simplicity; these are the leading qualifications which should distinguish an officer selected for the head of the staff.

Formerly the duties of the chiefs of the staff were confined to the necessary preparations for carrying the plan of the campaign, and the operations resolved on by the general in chief, into effect. In a battle they were only employed in directing movements, and superintending their execution. But in the late wars the officers of the staff were frequently entrusted with the command of a column of attack, or of large detachments, when the general in chief feared to disclose the secret of his plans by the transmission of orders or instructions. Great advantages have resulted from this innovation although it was long resisted. By this means the staff have been enabled to perfect their theory by practice, and they have acquired moreover the esteem of the soldiers and junior officers of the line, who are easily led

to think lightly of their superiors, whom they do not see fighting in the ranks. The generals who have held the arduous situation of chief of the staff during the wars of the Revolution, have almost always been employed in the different branches of the profession. Marshal Berthier who filled so conspicuously this appointment to Napoleon, was distinguished by all the essentials of a general. He possessed calm, and at the same time brilliant courage, excellent judgment, and approved experience. He bore arms during half a century, made war in the four quarters of the globe, opened and terminated thirty-two campaigns. In his youth, he acquired under the eye of his father, who was an engineer officer, the talent of tracing plans and finishing them with exactness, as well as the preliminary qualifications neces-



sary to form a staff officer. Admitted by the Prince de Lambesq into his regiment of dragoons, he was taught the skilful management of his horse and his sword, accomplishments so important to a soldier. Attached afterwards to the staff of Count Rochambeau, he made his first campaign in America, where he soon began to distinguish himself by his valour, activity and talents. Having at length attained superior rank in the staff corps formed by Marshal de Segur, he visited the camps of the King of Prussia, and discharged the duties of chief of the staff under the Baron de Bezenval.

During nineteen years, consumed in sixteen campaigns, the history of Marshal Berthier's life was little else but that of the wars of Napoleon; all the details of which he directed, both in the cabinet and the

field. A stranger to the intrigues of politics, he laboured with indefatigable activity; seized with promptitude and sagacity upon general views, and gave the necessary orders for attaining them with prudence, perspicuity, and conciseness. Discreet, impenetrable, modest; he was just, exact, and even severe in every thing that regarded the service; but he always set an example of vigilance and zeal in his own person, and knew how to maintain discipline, and to cause his authority to be respected by every rank under his orders.

LXXV.

Page 61. A commandant of artillery should understand well the general principles of each branch of the service, since he is called upon to supply arms and ammunition to the different corps of which it is composed.

After having recognized the advantage of entrusting the supply of arms and ammunition for an army to a military body, it appears to me extraordinary, that the same regulation does not extend to that of provisions and forage; instead of leaving it in the hands of a separate administration, as is the practice at present.

The civil establishments attached to armies, are formed almost always at the commencement of a war, and composed of persons, strangers to those laws of discipline which they are but too much inclined to disregard. These men are little esteemed by the military, because they serve only to enrich themselves without respect to the means. They consider only their private interest in a service, whose glory they cannot share, although some portion of its suc-

cess depends upon their zeal. The disorders and defalcations incident to these establishments would assuredly cease, if they were confided to men, who had been employed in the army, and who, in return for their labours, were permitted to partake with their fellow-soldiers the triumph of their success.

LXXVI.

Page 62. To reconnoitre accurately defiles and fords of every description. To provide guides that may be depended on. To interrogate the *cure* and postmaster. To establish rapidly a good understanding with the inhabitants. To send out spies. To intercept public and private letters. To translate and analyze their contents. In a word, to be able to answer every question of the general in chief when he arrives at the head of the army; these are the qualities which distinguish a good general of advanced posts.

Foraging parties composed of small detachments, and which were usually entrusted to young officers, served formerly to make good officers of advanced posts; but now the army is supplied with provisions by regular contributions, it is only in a course of partizan warfare, that the necessary experience can be acquired to fill these situations with success.

A chief of partizans is to a certain degree independent of the army. He receives neither pay nor provisions from it, and rarely succour, and is abandoned during the whole campaign to his own resources.

An officer so circumstanced must unite address with courage, and boldness with discretion, if he wishes to collect plunder without measuring the strength of his little corps with superior forces. Always har-

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passed, always surrounded by dangers which it is his business to foresee and surmount, a leader of partizans acquires in a short time, an experience in the details of war rarely to be obtained by an officer of the line; because this last is almost always under the guidance of superior authority, which directs the whole of his movements, while the talent and genius of the partizan are developed and sustained by a dependence on his own resources.

LXXVII.

Page 63. Generals in chief must be guided by their own experience or their genius. Tactics, evolutions, the duties and knowledge of an engineer or artillery officer, may be learned in treatises, but the science of strategy is only to be acquired by experience, and by studying the campaigns of all the great captains.

A great captain can only be formed, says the Archduke Charles, by long experience and intense study—neither is his own experience enough—for whose life is there sufficiently fruitful of events to render his knowledge universal? It is therefore by augmenting his information from the stock of others, by appreciating justly the discoveries of his predecessors, and by taking for his standard of comparison those great military exploits, in connection with their political results, in which the history of war abounds, that he can alone become a great commander.

LXXVIII.

Page 64. Read again and again the campaigns of Hannibal, Cæsar, Gustavus Adolphus, Turenne, Eugene, and Frederick. Model yourself upon them. This is the only means of becoming a great captain, and of acquiring the secret of the art of war. ;

NOTES.

It is in order to facilitate this object, that I have formed the present collection. It is after reading and meditating upon the history of modern war, that I have endeavoured to illustrate by examples, how the maxims of a great Captain may be most successfully applied to this study. May the end I have had in view be accomplished!



FINIS.

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